

Kuwaiti premier backs democracy, rejects pressure

KUWAIT (Agencies) — Crown Prince and Prime Minister Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah said democracy was a way of life in Kuwait but rejected pressure methods by politicians seeking reinstatement of the dissolved parliament, a newspaper reported Wednesday.

Sheikh Saad, in an interview with Ahmad Jarallah, editor-publisher of the widely read Al Sayassah daily said "everything is possible through dialogue, fraternal meetings and sincere intentions but other methods will turn out to be futile."

"There were drawbacks in the parliamentary experiment and not in the democratic process," he said.

The government stood by the freedom of speech, provided that it did not undermine the country's stability and security, he said.

"We are not against the other opinion. On the contrary, we do hear the other opinion provided that it is a clean opinion that avoids defamation and encroachment on the dignity of other people," he said.

"We know that some people are repeating themselves because what they say is meaningless... what should be known by all is that the government is keen on preserving the security and stability of the country and performing its civilisational role," he said.

Since early December deputies of the parliament dissolved in 1986 have been leading weekly rallies to press for its return.

The government says the rallies are illegal. Police broke one up Jan. 8 but the latest, Monday, attracted a crowd of several thousand and passed peacefully despite a heavy police presence.

It was unclear from Sheikh Saad's remarks if the government would seek a change in the constitution, which states that the now disbanded assembly must approve any amendments.

"We say for clarification that what has been missing is the appearance of the parliament, not democratic participation," Sheikh Saad told the newspaper.

"The constitution is the state — one has its text and articles, the other is traditions and cus-

tom," he said.

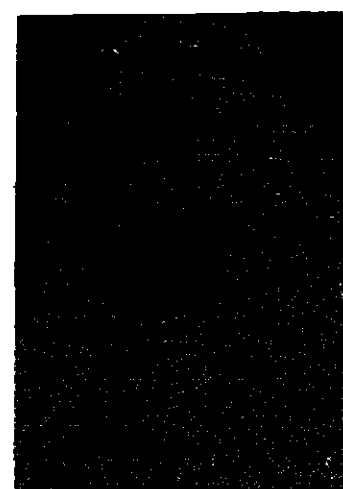
Opposition members fear the government may try to bypass the constitutional process to dilute the powers of the assembly or substitute a new body, a move they would fiercely oppose.

Ministers have complained that debates in the old national assembly sowed tribal divisions and other social tensions and caused problems with Kuwait's larger neighbours. They also say that lawmakers used their positions for personal gain.

"The citizens have announced their rejection of any movement that would revive class or racial struggle or discussion of factionalism," Sheikh Saad told the newspaper.

He said he wished a new formula were ready now but in the last few years the government was busy with the Gulf war, an economic recession and other difficulties.

"When the region stabilised and calm returned the issue of reorganising the Kuwaiti house was the political leadership's major concern. This included arranging economic and security



Sheikh Saad

affairs or developing the administrative apparatus," he added.

Earlier, Information Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al Sabah insisted that the government believed in democracy but was seeking an alternative formula to that of the elected 50-member parliament that prevailed since independence in 1961.

His statements unleashed a spate of editorial comments, including ones by Jarallah, adding their voice to the pressure for return of parliamentary life and asking for clarification on what other form of democracy the government had in mind.

Aoun embroiled in war on media

BEIRUT (Agencies) — General Michel Aoun, taking the offensive in a power struggle in Lebanon, Wednesday ordered the prosecution of media which defied his ban on identifying Elias Hrawi as president.

Aoun, who holds that President Hrawi was illegally elected in November, ordered all media Tuesday to stop identifying Hrawi as Lebanon's head of state and Salim Al Hoss as his prime minister. Hrawi was elected by Christian and Muslim members of the Lebanese parliament.

"With all our respect, we are not abiding by the decision," said a front-page editorial in Al Diyar newspaper, published in the Christian enclave controlled by the general's troops.

"He (Aoun) uses the law as an excuse and he is the first one to disobey it," Hoss told editors. "He praises freedom and is the first to say it... this man now forms a danger to the country and the people."

Aoun met public prosecutors at the shell-blasted presidential palace in east Beirut and decided to take legal action against those who had defied his decree.

"We have no militia, no troops, no foreign protection... we are only defending our small

house, our pen is our only weapon," said Al Diyar, describing Hrawi as president.

The Hrawi government has won wide international recognition and in December launched a bureaucratic and economic campaign to topple Aoun and reunite all of Lebanon under its authority.

Christian radio and television stations maintained a newscast strike for the second straight day to express their rejection of Aoun's orders, but have avoided a direct confrontation with the maverick general.

"We have decided not to abide (by the ban)," Al Diyar's publisher-editor Charles Ayoub said in his editorial.

Following Aoun's instructions, Ayoub wrote, would mean "suffocation... it is a serious beginning to limit the freedom of the press."

"We do not want a press chained with directives. We do not want a press that becomes our prison, we do not want the office to become our cell and we do not want a pen that becomes our handcuffs," Ayoub wrote.

"That is why we decided not to abide by all the directives because we do not want to divorce our freedom, betray our pen and de-

sert our office," he added.

Ayoub's article was repeatedly broadcast by radio stations operating in west Beirut, which is outside Aoun's control.

Aoun's 20,000 troops control the 800-square-kilometre Christian enclave which includes Beirut's eastern sector and a narrow strip northeast of the capital.

The army command of Gen. Emile Lahoud, which owes allegiance to Hrawi, quickly responded by warning the media against applying Aoun's directive or reporting any of his activity, terming him "an impostor."

Aoun, Hrawi and Lahoud are Maronite Catholics, the Christian sect that has dominated power in Lebanon since independence from France in 1943.

Al Diyar said the two directives were "the cross on which the free press would be crucified."

The Al Safir newspaper, which publishes in west Beirut, said Aoun was placing "freedom of the press under house arrest."

The paper, in a front-page banner headline, said Aoun's directive was "another separatist decision" by the 54-year-old.

The conservative daily Al Anwar, based in Beirut's Christ-

ian suburbs of Hazmryeh near Aoun's headquarters, followed the general's instructions. Voice of Lebanon radio of the rightist Falange party and Voice of Free Lebanon of the Lebanese Forces militia, maintained a news reporting strike for the second straight day in an apparent effort to protest Aoun's directive.

The Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation (LBC), the television station of the Lebanese Forces, also suspended its newscasts Monday.

The three Christian news organisations said they were considering Aoun's directive and will maintain the news strike until they decide what policy to adopt with regard to the directive.

An editor of LBC, speaking on condition he not be named, said the newscast strike was "the safest measure for the time being to avoid carrying out the ban or opposing it and going into an open confrontation with the general."

The strike and Al Diyar's defiance of Aoun reflected a mushrooming split within Christian ranks over an Arab League brokered peace plan to end the 14-year-old civil war that has killed more than 150,000 lives.

Rafsanjani survived assassination attempt

NICOSIA (AP) — Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani survived an assassination attempt in early January, reportedly the second in less than three months, according to a Tehran source.

The informed source, speaking on condition of anonymity, said he learned of the assassination attempt on Rafsanjani about two weeks ago from one of the president's bodyguards.

The source said one of Rafsanjani's bodyguards tried to shoot the president, but was overpowered by two other men before he could pull the trigger. The two men were injured when the gun went off, he added, but Rafsanjani escaped unharmed.

The source, a Tehran resident speaking from a European capital by telephone, had no other details.

There has been no mention of the attempt in the news media of Iran or by Iranian dissident groups, usually quick to report any sign of instability within the leadership.

Powerful radicals within the

Iranian government, who believe Rafsanjani's pragmatic policies pollute the pure Islamic ideals preached by the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, have been openly attacking his policies.

Former Interior Minister Ali Akbar Mohtashemi, leader of the radical camp and Rafsanjani's most formidable foe, was dumped by Rafsanjani when he formed his new cabinet in August.

Sources say rivalry between the two has exacerbated since Mohtashemi secured the Tehran seat in last month's parliamentary elections.

The reported attack was followed by a crackdown on Ayatollah Ali Montazeri, once Khomeini's designated successor and now one of the government's staunchest critics.

The source said that shopkeepers in the holy city of Qom, Montazeri's home town, went on strike after the senior cleric was arrested for a few hours.

The Iranian opposition group Mujahedeen-e-Khalq had re-



Hashemi Rafsanjani

ported Montazeri's arrest Jan. 6 but said he was released after several hours when tension mounted in the city.

Rafsanjani, 55, reportedly survived an earlier, similar assassination attempt by another bodyguard last October. At a press conference with foreign reporters in Tehran, Rafsanjani denied that there had been an attempt to assassinate him for several years.

The attack was reported to have followed a secret meeting by Rafsanjani and his cabinet, during which a plan was suggested to pull the country out of the economic doldrums.

Specter: Israel aid should not be reduced

TEL AVIV (AP) — U.S. Senator Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania Wednesday rejected an American proposal to cut aid to Israel and four other countries.

Specter said Congress would have to consider providing additional funds to help settle an expected immigration.

"We are cutting off the opportunities to come to the United States, so if Israel is willing to take these immigrants, it is something which is very helpful to the U.S. policy," said Specter.

He said he did not believe that Senate minority leader Bob Dole's proposed five per cent cut in U.S. foreign aid is aimed at Israel.

"Sen. Dole knows how to use a rifle instead of a shotgun. He's hitting a lot of other people if he's aimed at that one issue. He comes from a small town in Kansas where people know how to use firearms," Specter said.

Iraq ready to open air links, border with Iran

BAGHDAD (AP) — Interior Minister Samir Mohammad Abdul Wahab said Wednesday preparations had been completed for starting daily flights to Tehran and opening the land borders with Iran for visits by Muslim pilgrims.

The Iraqi News Agency (INA) quoted an unidentified Iraqi Airways official as saying four jumbo jets were ready to depart for Tehran to transport as many as 1,500 Iranian pilgrims daily to Iraq as soon as Iran agreed.

Abdul Wahab said in an interview with the magazine Alef Ba that the decision for the air link was based on a proposal by President Saddam Hussein last month.

Hussein proposed new direct talks to revive the stalled peace negotiations with Iran, exchange of prisoners of war, the opening of air links between Baghdad and Tehran and visits by pilgrims to religious sites in both countries.

Tehran, which insists on talks under United Nations auspices, called the proposal a "deception," and said it fell short for not

calling for an Iraqi troop withdrawal from Iranian territory captured during the eight-year-long Iran-Iraq war.

Abdul Wahab said that in addition to the air link, preparations had also been completed to assist prospective Iranian pilgrims.

The ministry of religious affairs has also prepared special "comfortable accommodation" for the pilgrims, he said.

Meantime 30 sick and disabled Iraqi prisoners of war (PoWs) released by Iran arrived in Baghdad Wednesday aboard a plane chartered by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

Akram Al Witri, a Foreign Ministry legal adviser, said Iraq would reciprocate by releasing 20 Iranian sick and disabled prisoners Thursday.

There was no explanation why Iraq would not release an equal number of prisoners. ICRC official said the chartered airliner that brought the Iraqi prisoners would remain in Baghdad to fly the released Iranians to Tehran.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEFS

Norway wants reduced role in Lebanon

OSLO (AP) — Norway wants to reduce its 850-man commitment in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) as of next fall, a government spokesman said. State Secretary Knut Vollebaek of the Foreign Ministry said on the national NRK radio that Norway would raise the issue with the U.N. secretary in New York in the near future. "It's not a question of withdrawing Norway from UNIFIL, only a certain reduction of our current engagement," Vollebaek said.

Iraq lifts travel restrictions

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraqi President Saddam Hussein has lifted travel restrictions imposed on Iraqis early in the Gulf war, Baghdad Radio announced. It said Hussein had ordered the economic committee at the council of ministers to take action to facilitate travel.

16 killed in Istanbul fire

ISTANBUL (AP) — Fire swept through a building housing textiles workshops Tuesday, killing 16 workers and injuring 10 others, police said. A police officer told the Associated Press that the fire started on the second floor of a five-story building in the central Istanbul district of Karmikapi. The blaze quickly spread to other floors housing several textile workshops, he said. He said that after extinguishing the blaze, firefighters removed the bodies of 16 young workers employed at synthetic fabric weaving workshops on the second and third floors of the building. He said most of the dead had been unable to leave their workshops because of the fire and suffocation. He said 10 other workers who had been injured were taken to hospitals. One was in serious condition. An official at the firefighting department of the Istanbul Municipality said he suspected the fire started in the electrical system but that authorities had not yet completed their investigation.

Riyadh: Ankara attack isolated incident

NICOSIA (R) — Saudi Arabia's deputy interior minister was quoted Wednesday as saying a bomb attack on the car of a Saudi diplomat in Ankara was an isolated incident. The Saudi daily Al Madina quoted Prince Ahmad Bin Abdul Aziz as saying he believed the attack was "an isolated incident carried out by individual criminals or parties." A bomb wrecked a Saudi diplomatic car in Ankara Sunday but caused no casualties. It was the second such attack in three months. An accountant at the Saudi military attaché's office lost both legs in a car bomb blast last October, responsibility for which was claimed by the pro-Iranian Islamic Jihad group based in Lebanon.

Lockheed employees detained in Chad

ATLANTA (AP) — Three employees of a U.S. aeronautics company have been detained in Chad during what company officials called a "misunderstanding" with the government. The three men are technical representatives sent to look after some C-130 Hercules airplanes sold to Chad by Lockheed Aeronautical System-Georgia, company spokesman Dick Martin said Tuesday night. Martin said Lockheed agreed to set up an office in Chad for one year after the sale of the aircraft so company technicians could help maintain the planes and explain their use. But when that year ended, in December, as the men packed up, they destroyed some documents, including manuals on the aircraft. Martin said the Chad government felt those documents belonged to them, while Lockheed maintains it was company material. Martin said Chad officials then revoked the men's passports, but he said they were allowed to roam their hotel and the surrounding area.

Kabul sees progress in national reconciliation

By Bryan Wilder
The Associated Press

KABUL — President Najibullah's government claims to have made tangible gains in its three-year old programme of national reconciliation even though it has not succeeded in ending the country's protracted civil war.

Government officials admit that fighting between their Soviet-armed troops and the U.S.-backed guerrillas continues to claim heavy tolls in life and property.

But they also claim to be achieving success through a campaign of offering amnesty to guerrillas who surrender and cash for their weapons.

Najibullah, former head of the feared Khad secret police, launched his national reconciliation programme in January 1987 with the first of a series of short-lived ceasefires that have been routinely rejected by Mu-

jahedeen.

"The last three years have been really difficult and full of problems because of the enemies of national reconciliation, but we have made a number of fruitful gains," government spokesman Naquib Sameer said.

He asserted that "70 per cent of armed opposition commanders have laid down their weapons and joined national reconciliation."

In November, the United Nations official in charge of Afghan refugee aid provided some support for the position. Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, told reporters in New York that many of the Mujahedeen commanders have de facto truces in areas under their control.

"In point of fact, a very large part of the country, which is rural, is controlled by the opposition, by the resistance," he said. "Two-thirds of the

country is gradually returning to normal."

Guerrilla leaders based across the border in Pakistan admit that some of their fighters in Afghanistan have struck deals with the government, but they say the majority are still fighting.

Azim Nasser-Zia, spokesman for the National Islamic Front of Afghanistan, one of the seven Pakistan-based Mujahedeen factions, scoffed at Sameer's claim.

"Maybe 70 per cent of the Mujahedeen have taken Najibullah's arms and money — but only to use it against him," he said.

Kabul officials claim that 168 "armed opposition groups" have joined Najibullah's national reconciliation process and that an additional 351 groups have signed ceasefire agreements.

These officials estimate that between 30,000 and 40,000

Mujahedeen are still fighting the government.

Mujahedeen leaders, however, claim they have a fighting force of 150,000 men, who move freely in much of the Afghan countryside but have failed to capture a single major city in the nearly 12-year-old war.

The Mujahedeen denounce Najibullah's People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan as "godless communists" and steadfastly refuse to enter into any power-sharing arrangements.

Abdul Rahim, spokesman for the Mujahedeen news agency Midia, said battlefield reports contradict Kabul's claims of widespread support for the reconciliation process.

"If anyone has joined the Communists, it's because they were Communists before," Rahim said. "The real Mujahedeen commander would never join Najibullah."

The Afghan war started in 1978 when the People's Democratic Party seized power in a military coup and embarked upon the Marxist policies that Najibullah now seeks to disavow.

In 1979, internal rivalries spurred another military coup within the party. By December 1979, the Soviet troops intervened to install yet a third Marxist government and stayed on to fight the growing Mujahedeen insurgency.

The Red Army managed only a stalemate before withdrawing its troops over a nine-month period that ended in February 1989. Since then, Najibullah has been supplied by Moscow with weapons and food but has not achieved a military victory over the fierce mountain guerrillas.

But he has felled U.S. and other Western predictions that his government would quickly tumble once the Soviets with-

drew their direct combat support.

"We think that the Mujahedeen commanders will come to the conclusion that further fighting is useless," Sameer, the government spokesman, predicted.

He claimed that "tens of thousands" of guerrillas had been killed in the past year, while only 700 to 800 government soldiers had died. The claims cannot be verified because most of the fighting takes place in areas usually inaccessible to independent observers and journalists.

However, more than five million Afghans — one-third the country's pre-war population — remain huddled in squalid refugee camps across the border in Pakistan and Iran. By the Kabul government's own estimates, fewer than five per cent have ventured home in the past three years.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME ONE

15:30 Koran
15:45 Programme review
15:55 Children programme
16:05 Book of Adventure
16:15 News for the Deaf
16:20 Religious programme
16:30 Programme review
16:40 News in Arabic
16:50 Local series
17:00 Programme review
17:10 Local programme
17:20 Arabic film
17:30 News in Arabic

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 Tel Fere Tel Film
18:15 La Chance aux chameaux
18:30 News in French
18:40 Silence on Tourne
19:00 News in Arabic
19:10 Varieties
19:20 News in Arabic
19:30 A Different World
19:40 NBA Basketball
19:50 News in English
20:00 Feature Film: "Forbidden Love"

PRAYER TIMES

05:11 Sunrise (Doha)
05:32 Sunrise (Doha)
11:45 Dhuhr
14:35 Asr
16:49 Maghrib
18:20 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swetlik Tel. 810740

Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 637785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

Church of the Assumption Tel. 677400

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

Terranova Church Tel. 622366

Church of the Assumption Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 625443

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Assiout International Church Tel. 627961, 683226

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811255

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817 and 654922

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

It will be partly cloudy and a rise in temperatures will occur. Winds will be northerly to moderate. In Asaga, it will be partly cloudy with northerly moderate wind and calm sea.

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 10, Asaga 10. Humidity readings: Amman 50 per cent, Asaga 65 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Salma Al Daboubi 812588
Dr. Majed Abu Sadeh 881635
Dr. Amjad Nawas 781836
Dr. Hanna Mansour 732574
First pharmacy 661212
Al Asma pharmacy 67055
Nakrosh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636790
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shimshat pharmacy 671660

IRBID:
Dr. Mohammed Al Tayari (—)
Al Sharar pharmacy 985236

ZARQA:
Dr. Zaid J. J. (—)
Khalid pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630341
Rescue 630341
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Fire Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 863590
Public Security Department 633321

HOTEL COMPLAINTS

Hotel Complaints 605800
Police Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 671467
Complaints 671467
Amman Municipality 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Reprints 623101
Abdali Telephone Reprints 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680103
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power 636361
RJ Flight Information 06-532301
Queen Alia Int. Airport 06-532300

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 81381222
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn 642816
Abdali Maternity, J. Amn 642412
Jabal Amman Maternity 642462
Molles, J. Amman 6617114
Palestine, Shamsi 661101
Shamsi Hospital 661101
Al-Muhsin Hospital 6612757
The Islamic, Abdali 6615446
Al-Ahli, Abdali 7710173
Indian, Al-Muhajira 863590
Al-Basir, J. Ashraf 7731126
Army, Marfa 89161175

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)53230-5, where it should always be verified.

FOR THE TRAVELLER

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
08:00 Damascus (RJ)
08:15 Amman (RJ)
08:30 New Delhi (RJ)
08:45 Cairo (RJ)
08:50 Singapore, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
09:00 Dhahran, Kuwait (RJ)
09:15 Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (RJ)
09:30 London (RJ)
09:45 Amman (RJ)

DEPARTURES

Lower House to meet on amendments

AMMAN (Petra) — The Lower House of Parliament has been called for a meeting Saturday to discuss several law amendments including one on agricultural marketing and another on the planting of tobacco.

A parliamentary committee charged with investigating the recent disturbances at Yarmouk University in Irbid held a meeting Wednesday and heard a testimony by Dr. Foad Al Sheikh, the university's vice-president, and Dr. Khaleel Omari, the dean of the students department.

Sheikh told the committee that a full university report on the incidents, in which several students were injured during a fight following the end of an exhibition on the Palestinian uprising, would be prepared soon and would be submitted to the committee to help its members reach a resolution.

Lower House of Parliament Speaker Suleiman Arar called the public health and environment committee for a meeting Tuesday to elect its rapporteur and chairman. The House's financial committee will resume its meetings at the House Saturday.

Support for Intifada

Three deputies in the Lower House urged Jordan and the Arab World to rally behind the uprising in occupied Palestine and to extend all possible assistance to the people in the face of Israel's practices and atrocities.

The deputies, Fakhri Kawir, Yusef Al Athem and Hossni Al Shihab, who were addressing a general rally held at the Professional Association Complex in Amman, called for discussion on ways of supporting the Intifada, now in its third year.

Athem said that financial, moral, and diplomatic support should be extended by the Arab Nation to the Palestinian people "who are fighting for their freedom and an end to occupation." He said that the Palestine question was a cause for Jordan and the rest of the Arab World.

Kawir urged writers and intellectuals to contribute towards the ongoing campaign to rally support for the Palestinian people.

Dome of the Rock restoration to begin in April

AMMAN (J.T.) — Two international firms will begin restoration work at the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem by the first of April 1990 in accordance with plans set by a special Jordanian committee charged with the project by the government, according to commitment member Raef car of Nijm.

Nijm, a former minister of public works and an engineer, said that the dome of the shrine, the third holiest in Islam, was severely damaged by an arson attack in 1969, which resulted in cracks in the walls and roof. Apart from that, the whole dome has become unfit for the shrine because many parts of it have been pulled off from its holding frame,

Amman institute hopes to benefit from IMF training

AMMAN (Petra) — The director of a training institute affiliated to the Washington-based International Monetary Fund (IMF) met with Washington-based officials here to discuss Wednesday the prospect of sending experts from the IMF Institute to organize training seminars at the Amman-based Arab Institute for Banking Studies (AIBS).

Minister of Finance Basel Jarrah Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) Governor Mohammad Saeed Al Nabulsi and AIBS director Hamdi Saqqa held meeting with Gerard Teyssier on cooperation in training related issues with the IMF Institute.

Saqqa said he discussed with Teyssier the prospect of providing the Washington-based institute's training to Arab bankers and other officials here in Amman with the help of IMF experts instead of sending them to Washington.

Agreement was reached at the meetings to expand the scope of cooperation between the two institutes with a view to benefiting from IMF expertise in banking business of the Arab World, Saqqa said.

WHAT'S GOING ON EXHIBITION

★ An exhibition entitled "They chose 30 poets" at the French Cultural Centre.

FILMS

★ A feature film entitled "La Bombe" at the American Centre — 7:00 p.m.

★ The second part of the Soviet film "The Risk" at the Soviet Cultural Centre — 6:00 p.m.



Palestinian children at one of the refugee camps that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency administers (UNRWA photo)

U.N. to stop EC meals for Palestinian children

By Alastair Lyon

Reuter

AMMAN — Palestinian refugees in Jordan are protesting a United Nations decision to stop distributing extra meals from the European Community (EC), to almost 10,000 youngsters.

They say the move is "void of reason and wisdom" and with Jordan suffering an economic recession will have "very grave consequences (for) the health standards of the beneficiaries."

Some 3,500 Palestinian children aged three to five get a sandwich a day and a hot meal a week from the U.N. Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

The European Community donates the food, worth \$2 million a year. UNRWA spends \$700,000 to prepare and distribute it. The food and money will still be used to aid Palestinians, but not necessarily in Jordan.

Elie Saaf, UNRWA director in Jordan, told a news conference Wednesday: "Criticism from the refugees was expected. But we feel we have to do this."

A survey by UNRWA and the World Health Organisation (WHO) two years ago found no malnutrition in Jordan or among the 900,000 resident Palestinian refugees, including up to 250,000 living in camps, he said.

The meals-for-toddlers approach will be phased out this year and replaced with a target programme providing food in needy cases spotted by medical workers.

A committee representing refugees has written to UNRWA's Vienna-based Commissioner-General Giorgio Giacomelli complaining about the decision.

Abdel Aziz Saqar, secretary of the committee, told Reuters: "It seems to me that all this is pressures being practised on us for political ends," he did not elaborate.

Sheikh Abdul-Hamid Al Sayeh, speaker of the Palestine National Council, said in a statement UNRWA's move could be a first step towards ending services to Palestinian refugees.

He appealed to Arab and Islamic countries to persuade UNRWA to reverse the decision.

UNRWA, which is making budget cuts this year because the United States has reduced its contributions, provides education, health and relief services to more than two million Palestinian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"It's up to the commissioner-general to decide where the needs are greatest," Saaf said.

The Jordanian committee in charge of restoration at the shrine is chaired by Chief Islamic Justice Mohammad Mhailan, who last November estimated the dome project to cost JD 2 million.

The committee's work on the inside of the Mosque, Nijm said, went rather slowly mainly due to obstacles placed by the Israeli authorities. He said that the Israelis had on several occasions stopped workers from entering the work site, prevented the required supplies and building materials from reaching the engineers and workers, arrested some of the workers, sent in extremists to pray in the shrine and continued its archaeological digging under the mosque.

According to Nijm, the rebuilding of the Saladin Pulpit will be included in the third stage of the project and after sufficient allocations have been made.

He said work on the Pulpit would involve technicians experienced in wood carving. The Pulpit was erected by Saladin, the famous Muslim leader who liberated the city of Jerusalem from the Crusader in 1187 A.D.

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Hurdles face fired employees

By Suhair Obaidat

Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A panel representing employees who lost their jobs for political reasons is facing problems in efforts to help restate dismissed employees due to the absence of a practical mechanism after the government's decision to amend martial laws regulations, according to a member of the committee.

Until noon Wednesday, the panel received around 270 applicants and more are being handed in. "It is too early to say how many people were actually dismissed from government jobs over the years since many of them have left the country, but, according to Nimer Sarhan "the number of cases are much higher than the applications that have actually reached us."

"We even received a great number of applications from employees who were dismissed for non-political reasons, like embezzlement and dealing with drugs, but we turned them down, because this committee is only for those dismissed for political reasons," Sarhan told the Jordan Times.

The temporary committee, which is affiliated to the public freedoms committee in the Professional Associations Complex, plans to review its work at a meeting to be held Saturday.

The major problem encountered by the committee, according to Sarhan, is that the government decision does not mean that the dismissed people would be reinstated to their previous jobs.

Sarhan said many of such people approached the government seeking the jobs from which they were dismissed but were told that they could only apply as new candidates and that the government decision only meant that they were now free to apply for government jobs.

"This, in effect, means that the government has not fulfilled the purpose of redressing the effects of martial law," Sarhan asserted.

Saturday's meeting will be open for all employees dismissed for political reasons and the main purpose of the gathering is to discuss and draft a memo to be sent to the prime minister, Sarhan said.

The memo will request the reemployment of all dismissed employees and giving them all their legal rights, be it in salaries or grades for promotion," Sarhan said.

Lawyer Asma Khader, a leading human rights activist, will brief the Saturday gathering on the legal status of the fired civil servants, and answer related questions, Sarhan said.

The legal status of the dismissed employees has many angles. For instance, there are many who have reached the age of 60, and if the lost years of service are not considered they will lose their pensions.

According to Sarhan, the High

Court of Justice has ruled out the duration that a dismissed civil servant spent in the private sector before being reinstated in the civil service should be considered as continued service in the government.

On a constitutional level the issue is that the dismissal is indeed legal because martial law (by which the employees were dismissed) is legal.

However, another explanation says that although the martial law is based upon Article 125 of the Constitution, it contradicts the Constitution itself. So the procedures taken according to martial law are not constitutional," according to Sarhan.

According to Sarhan, since the termination of services and frozen promotions had an adverse impact on the standard of living of the concerned people they should be seen as part of "the impact of martial law regulations" which the executive authority is committed to cancel.

Following the final session, Ali Safadi, director general of the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said the Federation of Arab News Agencies (FANA) had announced its intention during the meetings to reexamine means of presenting news so that protocol news would be scaled down and more focus would be given to national news and matters related to cultural affairs and development in the Arab World.

FANA, which organized the meeting in cooperation with Petra, will also embark on promoting its cooperation with Arab news agencies making use of satellites and establishing a data bank with the help of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) to provide more precise information to the outside world, Safadi said.

Dr. Adnan Salem, the UNESCO delegate to the meeting, said the participants had a very useful exchange of ideas and information during the meetings. UNESCO will continue to provide help to the Arab news agencies to enable them to cope with modern developments in communications, information and news media, Salem said.

FANA Secretary General Farid Ayar told Petra that the federation was currently holding contacts with news agencies in Eastern Europe to prepare for joint meetings to plan cooperation.

The meetings are needed to base cooperation on mutual understanding and to root out false ideas about the Arabs being hostile to the liberalisation movement in Romania and other parts of Eastern Europe, Ayar said.

During the recent upheaval in Eastern European countries, Israel and its allies succeeded in whipping up an anti-Arab campaign and "the Arabs should counter this move which could damage Arab-European relations," Ayar said.

Upon the conclusion of the meetings, the participants sent cables of appreciation and gratitude to His Majesty King Hussein for the new liberal and democratic climate in Jordan's politics. They said that such situation could and would contribute towards an increase in the flow of objective news from the Arab World.

Arab delegates at the meeting represented Egypt, Morocco, Algeria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Syria and Jordan.

AMMAN (R) — The head of Jordan's banned Communist Party Wednesday praised the government's scrapping of a 37-year-old anti-communism law.

"This is a great move which fulfills our old wishes," Ya'qoub Zayadin, the party's secretary-general told Reuters.

"We hope this move will bear other positive things like allowing us to issue our own newspaper and giving our party total legality to work in Jordan," he added.

The government Tuesday revoked the law as part of measures promised by Prime Minister Mudar Badran last month towards greater political freedom.

Badran had said that martial law, imposed since 1967, would be lifted before June.

His Majesty King Hussein has also promised a national charter that would lay the ground for some form of a multi-party political system.

Political parties have been banned in Jordan since 1957, but many of their members, who ran in the general parliamentary elections in November, won seats in the Lower House of Parliament.

In another statement carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Ziyadin said the government decision was in line with its policy of reexamining all laws that restrict public freedoms prior to amending them or scrapping them altogether.

"The decision is a true manifestation of the government's commitment to pursue the course of democracy," Petra quoted Ziyadin as saying.

AMMAN (Petra) — Mosque pulpits are solely for preaching the Islamic faith and should not be used for election campaigning or discussing parliamentary or political affairs, Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Ali Al Faqr warned Wednesday.

"Any plans for holding ceremonies in mosques should first be approved by the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs and its affiliated departments around the country, provided that no Parliament related affairs are involved," minister said at a meeting with directors of Awqaf departments in various governorates.

"Preachers should refrain from giving hostile hints about any organisations or institutions in Jordan because this totally contradicts the Islamic faith," the minister warned.

He said that preachers should abide by the ministry's instructions.

AMMAN (J.T.) — Al Quds Open University (QOU), the first of its kind in the Arab World, is to open its doors in the spring of 1990, following a long process of preparations and unexpected delays, according to the university's president, Dr. Munther Salah.

"We will start off with three programmes — land and rural development, accountancy and data systems and education," Salah said in a statement to Al Dustour Arabic daily.

QOU is initially aimed at providing education to people in the occupied territories and will try to fulfil this goal from its temporary headquarters in Amman, Salah said.

The university has contacted a number of Arab television stations, specially those in Jordan and Egypt, for broadcasting education programmes with special attention given to Jordan

Television, which is located in a central geographical area and whose programmes can reach all the occupied lands, he said.

"The educational programmes will be telecast during the day so as not to interfere with the routine programmes, and we might start off with an hour-a-day programme in the initial stages," Salah told Al Dustour.

Salah, a former president of Al Najah University in the occupied West Bank town of Nablus who was expelled to Jordan, said that no final agreement had been reached with any television station, but negotiations were underway.

The open university is not aimed at substituting the universities of the occupied territories but as a back-up institution, specially in the light of the situation in occupied Palestine resulting from the Intifada," Salah said. At the same

time, it will try to benefit all those wishing to acquire higher education in the Arab World through distance education methods and will beam its programmes through branch offices that would be opened in Kuwait, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Tunisia and Sudan as well as Jordan, Salah said.

The university is now facing financial difficulties, Salah said. He expected these to be overcome in five years. However, he said, the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) has offered \$1 million in assistance, and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) has been providing aid to the university since 1976.

The university has requested additional help from UNESCO in the form of a television studio which is needed for broadcasting the programmes, Salah added.

Japan has been approached to provide \$600,000 in aid to the university but nothing has yet materialised, he said.

Salah said students from the occupied territories and Jordan will be asked to pay \$15 per credit hour, those in other Arab countries \$30 and of those in Arab oil-producing countries \$60, according to Salah.

The university will be preparing modern programmes employing modern technology to be presented in a modern method with teachers providing instructions and guidance to students by correspondence. In the future, the university will be providing courses that can benefit socio-economic development in the Arab World and subjects like mechanical and electrical engineering, informatics and rural development, as well as management and education.

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Chairman of the Board of Directors:

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Editor-in-Chief:

DR. WALEED M. SADI

Editorial and advertising offices:

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Facsimile: 661242

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Time for reassessment

AS His Majesty King Hussein has stated in an interview published in the Boston Globe newspaper recently, the PLO is being constantly lured in to give one concession after the other with no visible sign that it is getting anywhere with its peaceful and flexible position. "If the PLO appears to be giving and giving and more is demanded of it," the King warned, "what can be the result except shaking the foundation of confidence that it has from its constituency."

King Hussein went on to say that he feared that there were serious attempts to undermine the PLO and destroy its image within the Palestinian people. There are also voices from within the PLO who are now calling for a reassessment of its approach and tactics regarding the peace process in view of the fact that it has reached a fatal deadlock. Since there is a wide consensus that the PLO has gone too far by offering a chain of concessions without yet gaining acceptance as a real negotiating partner and that time is therefore propitious to reassess the options still available to the Palestinian side, it is high time to spell out these options not in secret corridors and confidential meetings but out in the open so that the Palestinian people at large would have an opportunity to share in the reflections and reassessment of such options. After all this is the spirit of democracy that is sweeping through the entire face of the earth and it is high time that the people affected by major national decisions are brought into the reassessment process.

The first and most urgent thing that needs to be addressed is the course and tactics of the intifada especially after it has established itself beyond a shadow of doubt as the best catalyst available now to support and realise the national aspirations of the Palestinian people for statehood and self-determination. And in view of the fact that events in Eastern Europe and within the Soviet Union are overshadowing the Palestinian uprising, it is imperative that new tactics be deployed to perpetuate the intifada in order to win back the distracted world attention. It appears, for example, that the intifada would probably continue for a long time and as has been suggested by some knowledgeable people instead of daily routine bursts expressing opposition to Israeli occupation, the Palestinian people may want to consider periodic major bursts of the kind that stands to bring back the focus of international attention back to the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Such an intermittent tactic could facilitate the carrying on with life in the occupied territories and would prolong the ability and capacity of the intifada to go on as long as necessary and if need be indefinitely. Needless to say, the Palestinian people are the best judge of which way to go and it would be presumptuous on spectators, even the faithful among them, to preach to them from a distance. Yet one thing is now clear: There is going to be a long way before real negotiations will start between the parties involved in the Palestinian conflict and there is therefore an urgent need for reassessment of the options and tactics.

JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

Jordanian newspapers on Wednesday's dwell on Israel's absorption of thousands of Jews to be settled in the occupied Arab lands; and discussed the serious dimensions of the Jewish immigration to Palestine.

Al Ra'i Arabic daily called an Arab summit meeting to decide on ways to deal with the problem and urged speedy action in the form of contacts with the Soviet Union and the United States. The immigration of thousands of Jews from the Soviet Union and the Eastern European countries to Palestine the paper said, constitutes a real aggression on the Palestinians and grave danger to their future, because the new Jewish comers will be settled on lands usurped from their legitimate owners and at the expense of the sufferings of the Palestinian people. The paper attacked the United States in particular because it said it is responsible for forcing the Soviet Jews to go to Israel by refusing to absorb any of them in its country, and because it is the real cause behind the uprooting of the Palestinian people from their own homeland. United States and Israel are now trying to inject newcomers into occupied Palestine to make up for the exodus of thousands of Jews who are leaving the country after discovering that they were deceived and misled by Zionist propaganda and lured to the occupied lands, the paper noted.

A guest columnist in Al Ra'i Arabic daily on Wednesday criticises two institutions in Jordan — the Jordan Radio and Television Corporation and the educational centres like schools and universities. Jihad Udeibat says that it is enough to watch television in the evening to be horribly bored with the readers of news and continuity programmes because of the numerous linguistic mistakes they make which shows that they are of poor training and poor education. The writer says that the country is full of people who can be more presentable on television in appearance and in language, but had not had the chance even to apply for jobs with the corporation. He also points an accusing finger at the Ministry of Education and the educational institutions for poor education offered to their students and calls for a real overhaul of the educational system in the country.

Al Dastour Arabic daily dwell on the Soviet Jewish immigration to Palestine and Yitzhak Shamir's statements in which he expressed his government's intention to settle Jews on Arab lands to which he said Israel should hold on for ever. This situation, the paper said, serves as an alarming bell warning us of the looming danger and of the serious consequences on the prospects of peace in the Middle East. The continued immigration is bound to have its adverse effects on Arab-Soviet relations and must prompt Moscow to realise that the immigration of Jews is dealing a detrimental blow to the Arab Nation's interests, said the paper. Instead of dwelling on this issue in the press alone, the Arabs should take up the matter with Moscow and should discuss this serious question at the Arab League and at the highest possible level, the paper suggested.

'Cut aid to Israel, 4 others'

The following article by U.S. Senate minority leader Bob Dole, Republican from Kansas, appeared in the January 16 issue of the New York Times:

It's always a little risky to predict history's verdict on contemporary events. But even from today's sometimes short-sighted perspective, it is safe to declare 1989 as one of the watershed years of the 20th century — the year in which Communism collapsed and the long dormancy of freedom suddenly and dramatically blossomed in places from Poland to Panama.

In fact, events have been moving so fast that, in some ways, we're all playing catch-up on our own analyses and policy prescriptions. A little caution makes great sense in such a volatile environment.

But this much is already clear: We do have an enormous opportunity to consolidate and expand freedom's gains and, at the same time, to enhance America's security and economic potential.

If the new democracies and free market economies fall, the long-term costs to America will be enormous. But if they succeed, it will mean that the United States could enjoy increased security, reduced defence budgets and armament levels and expanded markets for our exports and our ingenuity. Simply put, there is no

better investment we can make in America in 1990 than finding ways to support the new democracies.

That's the good news. The bad news is that supporting freedom is not free. It will cost bucks — big bucks. And we must find those bucks within the constraints of our own crushing budget deficits and a foreign aid budget that is already stretched to the breaking point.

We may be able to increase marginally our overall foreign aid expenditures. But the reality is that we are not going to have much more foreign aid money in the next few years, at least until the so-called peace dividend kicks in (if it ever materialises).

The immediate answer must include reallocation of what we are spending on foreign aid now.

Let me make this point clear: I am certainly not suggesting abandoning or short-changing our long-time friends around the world. They remain very important to us, and their needs are just as real and pressing as those of the new democracies.

What I am suggesting is to re-examine some of the huge aid programmes in a few coun-

tries — the so-called earmarked countries — that take most of our current aid budget. Right now, the big five — Israel, Egypt, the Philippines, Turkey and Pakistan — receive more than two-thirds of our foreign aid.

Does it make sense, at this historic moment, to provide these countries practically all of our aid at the cost of foregoing dramatically promising new aid initiatives in Eastern Europe or other important countries? What about, for example, those Latin American nations in the front lines in the war against drugs?

Consider this sample fact: A five per cent cut in current aid programmes for the big five would provide about \$350 million — enough to respond to the needs of new democracies such as Poland, Hungary, Panama and countless needy countries that under current allocations will receive not one penny of American aid.

Perhaps an even larger across-the-board cut and reallocation would be warranted, as the democratic revolution gains momentum. That would represent a better balancing of our limited resources with our changing priorities.

No doubt, these proposed reallocations will raise a hue and cry. But can't we convince

our friends who would "lose" a tiny amount of their aid how much it is in their interest, too, to help insure against the failure of new democracies and free-market economies?

Can't those pressure groups that have turned some of our foreign aid programme virtually into "entitlement programmes" realise that making some minor adjustments in aid allocations can simultaneously serve the countries of their special interest, and serve America?

And can't my colleagues in Congress, who have forced the president to swallow a few huge earmarked aid programmes, stand up in domestic political pressure and resist the temptation to politicise foreign aid? Can't they instead support an amended foreign aid strategy that more completely serves the national interest?

Even despite congressionally mandated aid programmes, the president has the authority to make the small allocations of foreign aid that I believe are warranted. I encourage him to consider seriously making those reallocations now. I stand ready to work hard to insure that the Congress and the American public will back him up.

To me, it boils down to this: Are big gains for freedom worth a small cut in a few huge foreign aid programmes? I say yes.

By Ralph Boulton
Reuter

EAST BERLIN — The East German army is booting its old Communist masters out of the barracks and ditching the clockwork Prussian discipline that made it the pride of the Warsaw Pact.

The goose-stepping parades that sent a chill through foreigners but delighted the country's old Stalinist leaders fell early victim to the march of "people power." Now the entire army is in the grip of a barracks revolution.

"In three months, the world has been turned on its head for us," said a young border guard idling by a hole in the Berlin Wall and watching the West go by.

"Not so long ago we could have been court-martialled for talking across the wall like this. We were an elite troop and expected to show total discipline," he said.

The plan to end the goose-stepping parades, considered by many a damning echo of Germany's militarist past, was announced by the new defence minister, Theodor Hoffmann, in November. "Parades for self-glorification are not necessary," he said in a newspaper interview. Hoffmann rushed to an army camp in early January after soldiers throughout the country went on strike against stifling discipline.

Fearful of a complete breakdown, he announced a cut in compulsory military service from 18 to 12 months, an easing of

East German army boots Communism out of the barracks

regulations to allow soldiers to go out in the evening without uniform and more home leave.

Discontent ran deep in the ranks.

"You don't find any motivated soldiers here. How can anyone be surprised if we don't understand the point of being a soldier any more?" one army unit said in a letter to the forces newspaper people's army last month.

Hoffmann moved quickly to purge the leadership and gave swift marching orders to Communist Party appointees — so-called political officers — who formed a parallel command, deciding anything from high strategy to the times of sports fixtures.

"The party will be out of the barracks within a week. All camp Communist organisations are being dissolved," defence ministry spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Uwe Hempel said.

On the barracks notice board, empty exhortations are replaced by posters of opposition groups that in October engineered the peaceful overthrow of the old Communist order.

Even a soldiers' trade union is in the making — a virtual blasphemy against the spirit that

shaped the old "army of socialism."

The revolution has not stopped at the doors of the officers' mess. Plans are afoot to purge uniforms of the clutter of braid and decorations that has run rampant in recent years.

"It wasn't what we wanted. Every time a new embellishment was introduced, officers groaned," Hempel said.

Back in the ranks, the harsher physical excesses of cold war camp life are also over.

The bane of the soldier's life, the early-morning run, has been banished and soldiers are left more free time. No more the dismal hours of Marxist-Leninist military theory.

"It's a relief not to have political instruction any more and wonderful to go out in the evenings without uniform," the soldier at the wall said, puffing on an American cigarette passed through by an Italian girl.

"Our uniforms allowed us to go to the front of the queue for a disco. But once in there, no girl would look at us."

The fashion-conscious serviceman is now even allowed to wear a moustache — providing he grows it while on leave — or shun

the barracks canteen and eat out at the local cafe.

In a further concession to the spirit of the times, the title of comrade has been dropped from protocol. Comrade sergeant-major has become plain old herr sergeant-major again.

"The atmosphere has changed. What we're aiming at now is a smaller, more efficient army," Colonel Hempel commented.

The 173,000-strong force will probably be cut back to around 120,000 over the next few years, he said.

The upheaval of the last three months has taken a heavy toll on the force.

Some 50,000 servicemen have drafted into the civilian sector, driving trucks, working in bakeries, helping in hospitals and labouring at docks. The flight of hundreds of thousands of people to the West has left labour shortages everywhere.

In the ports of Rostock and Mukran, Soviet forces have also been called in to keep the economy going. Moscow has kept some 380,000 troops in East Germany since World War II, though about 20,000 are due for withdrawal under unilateral Kremlin cuts. The onset of a harsh winter could make the army's problems acute.

"We just don't have enough specialists left to keep all our equipment in order. This means our readiness is not as high as it might be," Hempel said.

But we're reckoning that a NATO attack is not so likely at the moment.

After 50 years in exile, Albanian king still dreams of going home

By Greg Myre
The Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — From a rustic suburban house with a yard full of overgrown weeds, the man who would be Albania's king dreams of a return to the homeland he scarcely knew.

King Leka I, an exile for all his 50 years, says he believes the wildfires of reform elsewhere in Eastern Europe will ignite in long-isolated Albania, the region's last hard-line Stalinist state.

If a revolution comes, Leka says he would be proud to follow the footsteps of his father, the self-made monarch King Zog I.

But if the people don't want a king, he says, he'll settle for the chance to return to the country he was spirited out of in 1939 to escape invading Italian troops. He was just three days old.

Since then, Leka has lived in seven countries. He speaks eight languages, and says he has learned to feel at home "wherever I have my family and my dogs."

Even so, he says: "My only home is Albania."

Leka's father, the head of an Albanian clan, became Albania's prime minister in 1922, when he was still in his 20s. In 1928, the national assembly gave him a title that translated into "prince," according to Burke's Royal Families of London.

However, Zog proclaimed himself "His Majesty King Zog I," and the country's constitution called for his son to succeed him.

Zog died in France in 1961, and Leka was sworn in by the Albanian government-in-exile.

The would-be king is an imposing 6 feet 8 inches (2.1 metres) tall, with glasses and a full head of graying hair.

For a meeting at his home, he wears a pistol and a combat knife, and his military-style shirt has an Albanian crest pinned on his collar. His office walls are covered with fading maps and flags of Albania.

Last month, Leka called on Albanians inside and outside the country to rise up against "the tyrannical and atheist regime that has for so long misruled our beloved homeland."

He said the statement was broadcast into Albania from radio stations in Yugoslavia's Kosovo region, home to many ethnic Albanians, and also has been reported on Radio Moscow and Voice of America.

Albania's Communist Party chief Ramiz Alia has resisted reforms in the rigidly controlled nation, the poorest and most rural in Europe. The country has been largely cut off from the outside world since the Communists came to power in 1946 under Enver Hoxha, who ruled until his death in 1985.

The Albanian Communist Party daily newspaper, Zeri i Popullit, recently accused Albanian exiles of trying to foment an uprising that would bring Leka I to power. There have been uncon-

firmed Yugoslav press reports of unrest in Albania, which the Albanian government has denied.

Leka concedes that more than four decades of repressive rule will make it difficult to mobilise opposition forces. But he and his supporters have offices in France and elsewhere in Europe, and maintain clandestine contacts with government and military figures disgruntled with the Communist leadership, he said.

Because Albania is such a closed society, there is no accurate measure of Leka's support. But he believes he could serve as a unifying force among Albanians opposed to Communist rule, and is confident of his stature despite his family's long absence.

He points proudly to one of the final speeches made by Hoxha before his death in 1985, in which he says Hoxha called him a drug smuggler, a gun-runner and a trader in women.

"When your opponent insults you like that, he must see you as a threat," he said. "I took it as a great compliment."

During his exile, Leka's backers have included late Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, the late Shah of Iran, Saudi Arabia's King Faisal and Belgium's King Baudouin.

He paid tribute to them by naming his son Leka Anwar Zog Reza Baudouin, and has taught the boy, now 8, to consider himself crown prince.

Leka has used his contacts to support himself as a businessman,

exporting minerals and heavy machinery to the Middle and Far East. He also travels extensively to maintain contacts with the estimated 3 million ethnic Albanians who live outside the country, a number almost equal to those within.

Leka and his Australian-born wife, Queen Susan, left Spain in 1979 when Communist states put pressure on the Madrid government. He claims the Albanian government, worried about his support inside and outside his homeland, instigated the pressure.

A year later, the couple rented a ranch-style house at the end of a dirt road in the far northern suburbs of Johannesburg, intending to remain only six months. But Leka has stayed on ever since.

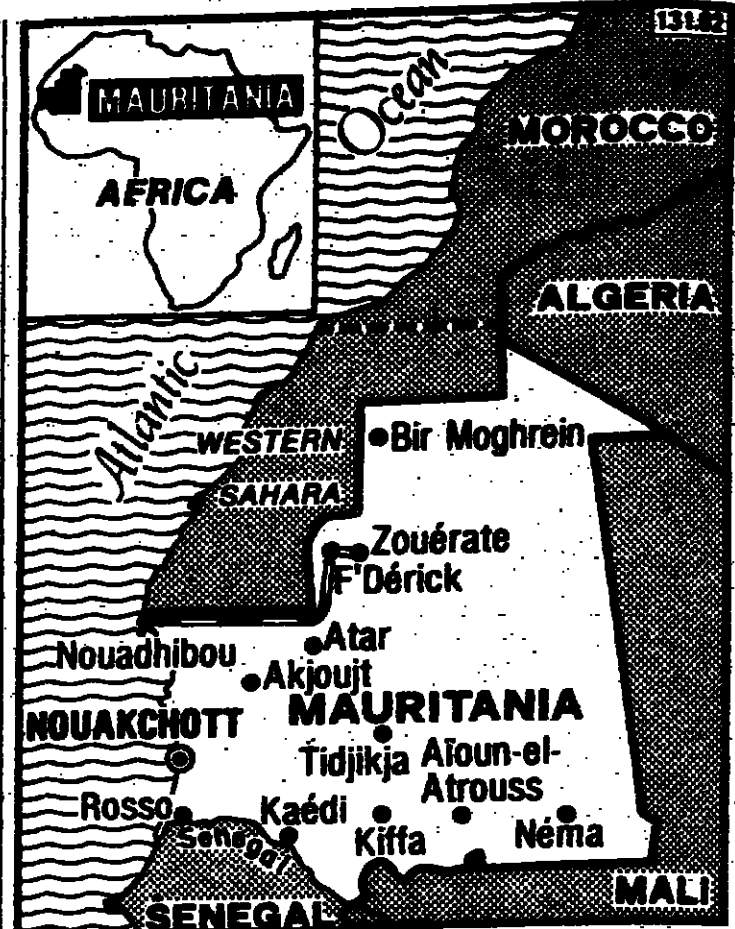
There are five dogs and a rusting pickup truck outside. Inside, a weapons collection includes blowpipes from New Guinea, a rhino-hide shield from Ethiopia, long-handled swords from Thailand and Zulu spears.

His favourites, Leka says, are a pistol given to him by his father and helmets from Iran that he says date back to the Crusades.

As for his own crusade, Leka can do little more than hope and wait.

"It has been difficult to wear several different hats — to try to be a businessman and lead a normal family life and to head an opposition movement," he says.

But Leka's belief in his birthright is unwavering.



Mauritania, Senegal prepare for talks

By Jean-Loup Fievet
Reuter

NOUAKCHOTT — Gunfire echoes ominously across the river border between Mauritania and Senegal, a menacing background sound at a time of hushed peace talks between the two west African nations.

Western diplomats said the simmering 10-month border conflict had worsened despite discreet mediation by Egypt, whose President Hosni Mubarak is currently chairman of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU).

"Sporadic shelling between the two armies has become common across the river. But the most worrying is the recent escalation in the use of weapons — heavy artillery such as mortars, machine guns and guns have now replaced light rifles and sub-machine guns," one diplomat familiar with the region said.

Secret talks in Paris earlier this month came after the first casualty was reported from the two armies facing each other across the shallow river Senegal — a Senegalese soldier killed in shelling of a border village by Mauritanian forces.

Since then, at least two other incidents involving troops have been reported.

Diplomats said the Paris talks were to pave the way for further talks there later this month, but neither government has confirmed that they took place.

The talks would be the first direct contact between the two countries since a brief meeting of interior ministers last June at the border town of Rosso to swap stranded cattle.

Two previous rounds of talks at ministerial level in neighbouring Mali failed to resolve the conflict, which started with a minor dispute over grazing rights at the frontier and led to ethnic riots and a flood of refugees in both directions.

Both governments appear keen to play down the current tension along their 800-km long border.

"Neither Mauritania nor Senegal could really expose themselves to ridicule and afford going to war. After all, the economic future of two of the world's poorest nations is at stake," a Mauritanian official told Reuters.

Senegal and Mauritania severed diplomatic links in August after communal violence killed hundreds of people and uprooted thousands in April and May. The conflict has revived ancient rivalries between black Senegal and mostly Arab Mauritania.

Mauritania has accused Senegal of fanning tension by sending and arming gangs of cattle raiders across the river and denied that its own regular army had been sent to the border.

Mauritanian Information Minister Mohammad Lemine Ould Ahmad said deployment of the Senegalese army on the border was a serious provocation. He suggested an end to hostile media propaganda, removal of troops from the border, reunification of divided families, return of property left across the border or financial compensation, and a halt to armed raids across the river.

"Any agreement which does not take these elements of de-escalation into account would be misleading," the minister warned.

The release last weekend in Nouakchott of 23 Senegalese fishermen arrested in July inside Mauritanian territorial waters is an encouraging sign, diplomats in the region said.

Senegal says all the waters are Senegalese, basing its claim on a 1933 French colonial decree, laying the international border lines along the northern bank of the river.

Mauritania disputes the claim, saying the waters are governed by international law under a 1972 agreement which created a regional water authority for the Senegal river.

LETTERS

Have fun !

To the Editor,

IN THE past few weeks I have had the opportunity of having to finish up a few official documents from several government departments and I have found out what a great pleasure it was besides being a great way to keep fit (running up and down dozens of stairs, walking into many offices and ending up nowhere, etc.).

I also found out the most beloved phrases that government employees love to utter, a few examples are:

1. "Come back tomorrow (next week, next month, etc.)."

2. "The person who has to sign this is not here today."

3. "Who sent you to this office anyway?"

4. "Go to (somewhere clear across town)."

5. "Can't you see that I am busy? If I want to answer each and every person's question, I'll never get any work done."

6. "The ultimate one I heard was: 'You need directions? Then stand in line and then ask me.' So I decided to write this article just to give people who haven't had this wonderful experience a bit of advice on what to expect (or not to expect)."

7. "Never expect to be greeted with a smile because that is truly wishful thinking."

8. "Never expect to be sent to the right office the first time around."

9. "Do not expect the employee who just stopped you in the corri-

dor to ask you what your problem is, is actually going to help you; he/she just likes to know what peoples problems are."

10. "Never expect the typist who has to type your letter to do it in one day, can't you see she's busy?"

11. "Never expect the person who has to sign the letter to be there, he will probably be sick, on leave, in a meeting, or he didn't show up today."

12. "Don't be silly enough to think that government employees work till 2 p.m., for if the person you're looking for is still in his office after 1 p.m., then he's probably having an important conversation with his colleagues and you'll have to come back tomorrow."

13. "Come back early tomorrow, it shouldn't take me more than half an hour to finish up your papers." Do not believe this, because he won't be there the next day, and even if he was, he won't remember you anyway."

14. "Please don't get mad if the whole file you're working on gets lost somewhere along the way, and you have to start all over again; this is just normal routine and it gives you the chance to have all the fun you had once again."

This is more or less the advice I can give, and to all those who haven't been through what I've been through, Good Luck and have fun.

Mazen Dajani
Amman



A. The photo of Aqaba before it got crowded

Nice place, lousy service

By Nur Sadi
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Mr. and Mrs. Dupont, who came from a small village in northern France, decided to invest their holiday money into an exotic new place. Having acquired all reading material and advertisements, and after long hours of contemplation they decided on Aqaba. As a first trip to the Middle East, they were enthusiastic towards an eventful holiday. But, as they were soon to discover, vision was truly deceiving.

It was on their second day in Aqaba that the Duponts concluded that "not only are the prices high, but spending money is not a pleasure." They explained that hoteliers neglected them by portraying carelessness and providing bad service. They said the food was inedible and the hotel room was unhygienic. To top it all the hotel was graded as a four star.

Ministry of Tourism Secretary General Nasri Attalah, says that such accusations are seldom heard by his ministry. "Every time I send inspectors to Aqaba, they come back reporting everything to be in tip-top condition." But, pondering moments over this, he admitted that government employees are not very good judges of tourist services. Mohammad Asfour, chairman of the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce, says that the lack of proper tourist services is a social problem. "Jordanians do not accept the idea of serving others and thus look at serving as a degrading job."

Aqaba, one of the most beautiful areas and Jordan's only beach resort, is having its image destroyed because concerned authorities are unable to coordinate and implement suitable services, specialist in the field observe. Not only does this affect international tourism to the country, but local tourists also voice complaints. They say their experience is not different, especially when they try to book in one of the "better" hotels.

Three young Jordanians, unable to travel abroad, settled for a holiday in Aqaba. But, while trying to find a room "We constantly received the same reply — 'sorry we're fully booked this week,'" one said. They later discovered that the hotels were actually quite empty! "Why would hoteliers deceive their local tourists in this manner?" one of the distressed young men asked.

Attalah observes that because of higher prices for international tourists, the hoteliers prefer to have rooms occupied by foreigners rather than locals.

The Duponts expressed their admiration of the Red Sea, its picturesque coral reefs, under the sea reddish-purple mountains which and the pastel-like colours of the sunset. But, despite all the nature surrounding them, they wanted something more.

"There are no activities nor entertainment at any hour of the day neither for children nor adults," the Duponts say. A hidden displeasure sneaked through their eyes when the Duponts were asked about water skiing. "We paid four Jordanian dinars for a meagre three minutes. The boat is old and the skis are in terrible condition." Most importantly, they exclaimed, the driver was unprofessional.

Attalah agreed that the Aquamarina, being the only ski facility, neglects its equipment due to lack of competition.

As long as people keep skiing — who cares?

Asfour suggested that the problem derives from "Jordanians not being oriented to accept tourists and their desires for their own concept of fun." We add that while there are some who are not oriented to accept tourists, there are others who are not sea-oriented and thus are not capable of grasping the prospect of Aqaba as a sea resort and therefore promote it accordingly. Aqaba should be the place for people to spend their vacations. But, alas, despite all its natural

attractions, Aqaba is suffering because concerned parties seem to lack initiative.

Attalah confirmed that it is difficult for the ministry to tackle the problems unless complaints come directly to them.

But, a concerned Jordanian argues that "the ministry need not wait for complaints in order to make some moves. The problems of Aqaba are visible; the fact that tourism has sharply declined and the occupancy rate is only 35 per cent is proof enough that Aqaba is becoming a disaster."

Asfour insisted that the Ministry of Tourism is unable to solve Aqaba's shortcomings on its own and suggested that the solution lies in cooperation between the government and the private sector through the chamber of commerce.

Already, Asfour declared that Royal Jordanian (RJ) had established offices worldwide in order to promote Jordan at the international level and arrange for

chartered flights with special packages directly into Aqaba's international airport. Asfour adds that Jordan is working towards attracting international companies to invest in Aqaba. "We believe that the Chamber of Commerce has to work hard in collaboration with the public sector to provide basic elements for attracting foreign investment."

Attalah agrees adding that the Ministry of Tourism is drawing plans to improve the situation by attending conferences and exhibitions abroad, advertising and issuing pamphlets, to promote tourism.

Many tourists like the Duponts say that although they expected more out of Aqaba, it is nevertheless beautiful in terms of its nature and archaeological surroundings. But the Duponts say, "It is not enough," and hope that with the authorities taking new measures Aqaba would prosper in the future, but for the time being "we do not think of coming back."

Spirit cult market defies Brazil's economic slump

By Todd Lewan
The Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil — In Ricardo Conceicao Lima's store, dried bat wings are a big seller. So are devil statues, baby snakes and deer antler shavings. Lately there's been a run on mystical African incense, said to attract wealth.

Lima's spirit-cult supply store, tucked away in the corner of a musty indoor market in Rio's poor northern zone, has a steady and loyal clientele.

While many retailers are struggling to stay afloat amid 1,765-per cent inflation and soaring interest rates, Lima says business is good and getting better.

"Since March our sales have jumped 50 per cent," he said. "The tougher times get, the better I do."

Lima is one of thousands of merchants who cater to Brazil's legions of spirit-cult worshippers.

An estimated 90 million of the nation's 150 million people follow African voodoo-style cults, generally lumped together under the term Macumba and descended from Yoruba and Bantu religions practiced by slaves.

Over the centuries the cults freely borrowed elements of Roman Catholicism, native Indian faiths and European witchcraft. They are now uniquely Brazilian, and have spread among all races and classes.

"Brazilians have lost faith in their leaders and are turning to spiritual means of solving their problems. Artists, businessmen, politicians — everyone has a hand in it," said Paulo Coelho, a magician and author of several books on magic.

Most cult-artists buyers are the poor who inhabit urban slums, jumbles of shacks lining dirt tracks with no plumbing or running water.

But a growing number of customers are middle- and upper-class Brazilians seeking help for emotional or financial troubles. Businessmen worried by inflation, women upset when their grown children leave home, unemployed college graduates frustrated with a shrinking job market.

At the heart of this phenomenon is the belief that many illnesses, economic headaches and romantic setbacks have a spiritual origin — and the same goes for good luck.

"I used to be just a manicurist," said Sonia de Oliveira, a 46-year-old Rio housewife. "But when I became a believer, my whole life improved. Now I have a car, a house and I don't have to work for anyone."

About 85 per cent of Brazilians profess to be Roman Catholics. But many see no conflict in spirit-cult belief as well.

To Tap the market, some merchants have switched from peddling household wares and clothes to hawk cult articles. Manoel Felgueiras Pontes gave up his fish stand to open a voodoo shop three years ago.

"I knew a lot of people would rather practice Macumba than cat," he said. "So I switched. I'm not sorry I did."

For the voodoo bargain hunter, the market in Madureira district, on Rio's north zone, is the place to shop. Some 37 of the 350 shops in this winding, shadowy market feature black magic items. All the visitor needs is a fat wallet and a strong stomach.

Outside the Oxala Tecidos shop, a life-sized Mannequin representing the spirit deity Exu is clad in a black top hat, boots and velvet cloak, holding a trident stand.

Africans believed Exu was the principle of change, movement and fertility. But under the influ-

ence of Roman Catholicism, Exu in Brazil became a devil.

This particular Exu is called Marabo, an entity said to bring financial success. His cape costs \$80. The boots are \$145; the trident \$45.

At the nearby Odo-Ya Voodoo shop, tourists used to cast evil spells go for \$25. Duck feet cost a mere \$4. Elephant tails, seashell necklaces and dried ears of corn used to ward off evil spirits range from \$1 to \$15. A bar of black, tar-like soap to wash away negative fluids goes for \$6.50. It's imported from Africa.

Short on cash? No problem. Proprietor Antonio Heleno accepts all major credit cards.

Heleno takes special pride in a collection of dull brown rocks sitting in ceramic bowls of water on the floor. Their magical properties are protected in blessed water, he explained. This week he's running a special sale — \$3 per rock.

Next door, animals are sold for sacrificial rituals, a controversial but widely tolerated practice.

The chickens' head, feet, wings and tail, said to hold the "axe" (ab-sheh) or magical force, are cut off in an age-old African ritual. Goats, stabbed in the neck during rituals, sell for \$3 a kilo.

Some object to the cult worship, especially sacrifices, but moves to ban such practices have not worked.

Last July, Rio councilman Wilson Leite Passos called for a law prohibiting animal sacrifice. Some 280 cult leaders clad in white lace turbans and glass-bead and tooth necklaces gathered on the steps of city hall and threatened to cast a spell over each councilman.

The Bill was quietly withdrawn.

Professional magicians argue that magical powers don't come pre-packaged.

Rare Siberian cranes could be war's unlikely victims

By Vijay Joshi
The Associated Press

BHARATPUR, India — The marshes of western India are the favourite wintering ground of the rare Siberian crane, a majestic and mysterious bird with a white body, a red beak and a haunting cry.

But fewer and fewer of the birds are being sighted, and some wildlife watchers fear they have become unlikely casualties of war, dying in the skies over Afghanistan.

Only 17 cranes arrived this winter in the Keoladeo national park at Bharatpur, once a duck-shooting preserve of maharajahs and now a sanctuary for more than 400 bird species.

V.S. Vijayan, a scientist with the Bombay Natural History Society who has been working at Bharatpur, said last season there were 24 cranes, and 31 this season before that.

Like the Afghanistan war itself, the puzzle of the Siberian crane has its partitions.

The theory that the birds are falling victim to Afghan gunners was advanced by an American

ornithologist. Some Indian wildlife officials and environmentalists agree. But a Soviet scientist has rejected the theory.

Indian officials also said recurring drought in Bharatpur may be contributing to the decline.

Ornithologists know little about the cranes, which fly from their breeding ground in the tundras of western Siberia to Bharatpur in India's western Rajasthan state. It is a journey of more than 5,000 kilometres, and takes about a month.

A smaller flock migrates to Iran. The two flocks leave their Siberian home in the Ob river valley in September or October, just as the snow begins to fall. They return in late February or early March.

The India-bound flock probably makes only two stopovers — in Soviet Kazakhstan and Afghanistan, according to Vladimir Flint, head of the Soviet's animal protection department at the All-Union Research Institute of Nature Conservation and Reserves in Moscow.

There are no precise estimates of the number of western Siberian cranes. Harris put the figure

at fewer than 50 altogether, but other estimates place it as high as 200.

"There is very little data about the birds. We hardly know anything about them except that they fly over Iran and Afghanistan to the marshes here," Flint said in an interview at Bharatpur.

"And there are a lot of people with guns in Afghanistan who are waiting to pull the trigger," said Jim Harris, deputy director of the International Crane Foundation based in Baraboo, Wisconsin.

Since the birds are safe from humans in the inaccessible Siberian tundras and in the sanctuary at Bharatpur, it is likely they are being killed during migration, Harris said.

But Flint, whose Soviet countrymen ended their nine-year military intervention in Afghanistan a year ago, said: "I do not agree that the birds are being killed over Afghanistan. Our next goal is to know the whole migration route and the dangers they face."

However, Prakash Gole, head of the Ecological Society based in Poona, India, agreed that Siberian cranes may be dying in

Afghanistan. He said other cranes were shot and sold for meat in Afghanistan even before the war erupted between the Soviet-backed government and U.S.-supported Muslim guerrillas.

Harris also said a dead Siberian crane turned up last year at a local meat market in Pakistan.

Flint, Harris and Gole came to Bharatpur at the invitation of the Bombay Natural History Society after attending a conference on cranes in neighbouring Gujarat state.

The freshwater marsh at Bharatpur, about 50 kilometres west of the Taj Mahal, was declared a shooting preserve for local maharajahs and British colonial rulers in 1902. Bird hunting was outlawed here in 1972, and the marsh was declared a national park in 1981.

The park's director, K.L. Saini, said the Afghanistan theory is an interesting one.

"But it is highly likely that the frequent droughts in the area may be the main reason for their decreasing number," he said. "Until about eight years ago

we used to have regular floods which kept the marsh alive and produced enough food for the birds."

Another set of cranes, apparently the same species as the western Siberian crane, breeds in eastern Siberia and migrates to China in winter. The eastern Siberian cranes are believed to number at least 1,400. Like the western cranes, they are considered endangered species.

Flint said the Soviets have begun studies to genetically compare the two types of birds. "But my guess is there will be no difference," he said.

The declining crane migration is of concern not only to naturalists. Those who earn their living by conducting tours of the sanctuary are worried too.

Udai Singh gives one-day tours costing \$100 for Western tour groups and 125 rupees, or \$7.35, for Indian groups.

"Everyone comes to Bharatpur to see the Siberian cranes," Singh said. "And when they stop coming here, even the tourists will stop ... I guess we will have to close shop."

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Bush administration wants changes in foreign aid

WASHINGTON (R) — The Bush administration said Tuesday it wanted greater flexibility in distribution of foreign aid to such traditional allies as Israel so that it could pour more cash into Eastern Europe and other nations.

The White House and State Department issued statements calling for greater adaptability in response to a proposal from Senate Republican leader Robert D. to trim aid for Israel, Egypt, the Philippines, Turkey and Pakistan and use the money in Eastern Europe.

"It's something that the administration thinks is well worth looking at in order to give us the very flexibility...in light of, let's take for instance, the unbelievable changes that have gone on in Eastern Europe," said State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler.

Around two thirds of all U.S.

aid is usually reserved for those five countries with around one third going to Israel and Egypt. But administration spokesmen said such earmarking tied President George Bush's hands in conducting foreign policy. The foreign aid budget is about \$14 billion annually.

Tutwiler said Secretary of State James Baker had discussed the issue with Dole and expected to talk with other congressional leaders soon.

White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater declined to discuss individual countries as aid recipients but said the administration wanted to see the system of aid

distribution changed.

"It goes to our general concern about the prerogatives of the president in making foreign policy decisions, and about our need to be flexible in terms of moving money from one country to another where needs may arise on short notice," he said.

Dole said in a New York Times opinion column that a five per cent cut in aid to the top five recipients would free \$330 million for "the needs of new democracies."

Israel and other countries have recently expressed fears that their positions as prime aid recipients could be eroded by the changes sweeping Eastern Europe.

Tutwiler said other regions also were clamouring for more U.S. aid. Those include Panama, whose economy was devastated after last month's U.S. invasion, and drug-producing countries in South America.

Australia resumes live-sheep exports to S. Arabia

CANBERRA (R) — Australia shipped 64,500 sheep to Saudi Arabia Wednesday, resuming a lucrative trade suspended for five months after a row over animal health.

The sheepcarrier Corno Express left Adelaide on an 18-day voyage with the first shipment since Australia cut the trade in August after five shiploads totalling 300,000 sheep were rejected. Saudi health authorities said at the time that some of the sheep were diseased with blue tongue and sheep pox, allegations denied by Australia because the diseases are not present in its commercial flocks.

Saudi Arabia has traditionally taken half the seven million live sheep, worth 230 million dollars (\$173 million), Australia normally ships to the Middle East each year.

The 300,000 rejects were diverted and sold to other Middle East countries, but the Australian Meat and Livestock Corporation suspended further shipments to Saudi Arabia pending government talks.

Contacts included a letter in November from Prime Minister Bob Hawke to King Fahd, who this week responded.

An Australian government spokesman Wednesday declined to disclose the Saudi letter's contents, but said "they... tend to affirm what is now taking place."

To try to allay Saudi concerns, Australia has placed a government veterinary officer aboard the Corno Express to monitor the health of the sheep on board.

The company chartering the vessel is part of the giant Elides IXL brewing and agribusiness conglomerate and spokesman Michael O'Brien said the 12,000-tonne ship was the world's largest and most technologically advanced sheep carrier.

Australian meat and livestock said if there was no problem with the shipment, imported by the Al Murkairish group, a second shipment would follow next month.

African economies continue retreating

ADDIS ABABA (R) — African economies improved slightly in 1989 but failed to keep up with population growth and on average Africans became worse off, the continent's top economist said Monday.

Adebayo Adedeji, head of the U.N. Economic Commission for Africa, called on creditors to slash the continent's \$250 billion foreign debt bill by at least half and allow a 10-year moratorium on repayments to support economic recovery.

"The international community must see 1990 as a year of opportunity to consolidate their cooperation with Africa, to ensure a stunning economic turnaround which leads to self sustained growth," Adedeji declared.

The debt trap was one of three "albatrosses" around African necks during 1989, allowing gross domestic product (GDP) to grow by only 2.9 per cent, he said in his annual state of the continent message.

This exceeded the previous year's 2.4 per cent growth but lagged behind Africa's population growth rate of more than three per cent, meaning per capita GDP fell 0.3 per cent after dropping 0.7 per cent in 1988.

In 1989, as in previous years, poor demand for export commodities, the debt trap and the harsh and rigid conditionalities of orthodox structural adjustment programmes constituted the three major albatrosses around the necks of the already fragile African economies," Adedeji said.

The fact that most of Africa enjoyed unusually good weather, boosting farm output by 3.1 per cent after 2.8 per cent in 1988, underscored the underlying fragility of its economies, he added.

Adedeji said a slump in world coffee and cocoa prices was hard on producers. Africa lost nearly \$250 million in export revenue since the international coffee ex-

port quota system collapsed last July and its 25 coffee exporting nations could lose another \$1.5 billion in 1990.

Mineral performance, helped by firm oil prices, was mixed in 1989, showing growth of 2.4 per cent after 3.2 per cent in 1988.

Manufacturing growth improved to 4.9 per cent from 4.3 per cent in 1988, but remained a "frustrated victim and helpless prisoner to a number of structural weaknesses and limitations."

Stronger prices for oil and other minerals contributed to a slightly brighter trade picture over around \$9 billion from \$11.3 billion in 1988.

Exports rose to \$67 billion in 1989 from \$57.7 billion in 1988 while imports rose to \$76 billion from \$69 billion.

But too much money was going into debt repayments, Adedeji said, noting this gobbled up 40 per cent of 1989 export income.

Foreign debt now equalled 80 per cent of total GDP, he said. Urging rich countries to act to ease the debt burden, he said such relief should not be linked to implementation of orthodox structural adjustment reforms.

Adedeji painted two scenarios for 1990, which he said would result either in another slip in per capita GDP of 0.2 per cent or a 1.3 per cent rise.

With no improvement in external factors, reflecting further poor demand for Africa's commodity exports, its economy could grow three per cent, with agricultural output rising four per cent, mining two per cent and manufacturing five per cent.

With an improvement in external factors, including debt relief, the economy could grow 4.5 per cent, with farm output expanding at a similar rate, mining by 2.5 per cent and manufacturing by six per cent.

Top Soviet economist eyes stock, commodity markets

THE HAGUE (R) — President Mikhail Gorbachev's top economic advisor said Tuesday Moscow should abolish state ownership of industry and create stock and commodity markets as part of a drive to rescue the moribund Soviet economy.

"The last we should do to make the transition to the market mechanism is to dismantle the state ownership system," Deputy Prime Minister Leonid Abalkin said in a speech at an East-West conference in The Hague.

Another condition for Moscow's planned move towards a market economy was "to establish the relevant infrastructure — such as commodity and stock markets," he said without elaborating.

Abalkin rejected charges of foot-dragging on economic reforms, saying none of the conditions was in place to abolish the Soviet system of central economic planning.

"So far not a single condition has been met," said Abalkin, who was in the Netherlands on a 36-hour visit for talks with Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers and Dutch businessmen.

"That means that there can be no place for a developed market of any kind as yet," said Abalkin, a radical economist whose ideas formed the basis for Moscow's

new six-year economic reform programme approved by parliament last month.

Abalkin warned time was running out for Gorbachev's policies if shops did not fill up by the end of 1990, and Moscow's top priority was to boost imports of food, consumer goods, pharmaceuticals as well as raw materials and machinery.

"This must be achieved before the end of the year. It will not be an overstatement to say that not only the prestige of the government but the destiny of perestroika depends on success in this area," he said.

But the Soviet Union was also looking at long-term cooperation with industry in the West, especially in Europe which accounts for 80 per cent of Soviet foreign trade, he said.

"The Soviet Union has a lot to offer its partners in the West, particularly in the light of the conversion of military production and the lifting of secrecy in many areas," he said.

Comecon agrees to aim for early currency convertibility

Meanwhile, Comecon finance ministers agreed Tuesday that the Soviet-led trading bloc should introduce accounting in convertible or national currencies as soon as

possible.

Czechoslovak Deputy Finance Minister Frantisek Pavelka told the official Czechoslovak news agency CTK that this had been agreed almost unanimously by Comecon's standing commission for foreign currency questions.

"According to convertible or national currencies will be introduced in the shortest possible time," he said.

The commission also agreed that real foreign exchange rates influenced by market conditions would start to be used, but Pavelka said it wanted this brought in gradually.

"From next January, a gradual transition to conditions existing in world trade will start," CTK quoted him as saying.

Comecon prime ministers, meeting in Sofia last week, agreed to switch their trade gradually on to a basis of hard currency accounting and world market prices.

That meeting was their first Comecon session since deep political and economic changes swept through Eastern Europe.

U.S. trade deficit widens by \$10.5b

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. foreign trade deficit widened in November to \$10.5 billion, its worst showing in 11 months, the government reported Wednesday.

The Commerce Department said that while imports declined by \$593 million to \$40.69 billion, U.S. exports dropped a larger \$843 million to \$30.19 billion. The trade deficit is the difference between imports and exports.

The government blamed much

of the setback on the Boeing aircraft strike, which severely cut into exports of expensive commercial airliners.

But private analysts were still disheartened by the deficit figure. Many had been looking for a slight improvement following a sharp deterioration in October.

The October trade deficit totalled \$10.25 billion. Both October and November represented the worst performance since a \$10.8 billion deficit in December 1988.

For the first 11 months of 1989, the U.S. trade deficit ran at an annual rate of \$11 billion, compared with a deficit of \$118.53 billion in all of 1988.

Many economists believe that the U.S. foreign trade deficit will increase in 1990, reversing a two-year trend of improvements.

This is an unsettling forecast for President George Bush's administration, which is counting on continued growth in exports to bolster the U.S. economy and dampen demands in Congress for protectionist trade legislation.

The 2.7 per cent drop in U.S. exports left them at their lowest level since last March.

Almost half of all economic growth in the past two years has been supplied by a boom in export sales. But economists are worried that these strong increases are in danger of stalling

out in 1990, in part because the dollar was rising in value most of last year. A stronger dollar makes U.S. goods more expensive on overseas markets.

On the import side, the 1.4 per cent November decline represented a drop from an all-time high set the previous month. Economists said U.S. consumer demand for foreign goods is showing little sign of slackening.

In addition, the United States is growing more dependent on foreign oil. Petroleum shipments climbed to \$4.38 billion in November, the highest total in six months, as the number of barrels imported rose two per cent to 8.42 million barrels daily and the price climbed by 24 cents to \$17.33.

As usual, the biggest trade deficit in November was with Japan at \$4.0 billion.

Chinese party calls for extended austerity plan

BEIJING (AP) — The Communist Party Tuesday unveiled a three-year austerity plan that officials concede will shut some non-state enterprises and which appears to keep market-oriented reforms on hold.

The 39-point document was prepared for a meeting of the party central committee last November and made public Tuesday.

It reflects a drive by the current conserving leadership to revive centralised economic controls, which were eased during the previous 10 years of reform, and give priority to development of large, state-run industries.

The document said the task of restoring order to the economy, begun in mid-1988, will take three years or more, during which time the nation's spending habits must be sharply curtailed.

The party, which was moving under ousted general secretary Zhao Ziyang toward a policy of non-interference in economic affairs,

must enhance its leading role in guiding the economy, the document said.

It said the nation's economic goals are to bring the inflation rate under 10 per cent a year, keep annual growth of gross national product to a manageable five-six per cent, balance the budget and wipe out financial deficits.

Steps must also be taken to overcome "the serious confusion in the realms of production, construction, circulation and distribution," it said.

China achieved some of those goals in 1989, dropping inflation from a high of more than 30 per cent in 1988 to less than 10 per cent in the waning months of 1989.

Industrial output growth was slashed from 17.7 per cent in 1988, which severely taxed the nation's energy resources and inadequate infrastructure, to 6.8 per cent last year.

However, the government's tight credit policy and suspension of thousands of building projects have led to widespread bankruptcies, plant shutdowns and a growing unemployment problem. The government has fallen further into debt because of decreased revenues and huge subsidies provided faltering state-run factories.

A government spokesman said last week that in some cities up to seven-eighths per cent of factories have stopped production because of a lack of operating funds, energy and materials.

The report said smaller township enterprises, the backbone of economic progress in rural areas during the past decade, will not be allowed to vie with large industries for raw materials.

Israelis demand 'work and bread'

HAZOR HAGLILIT (R) — Hundreds of angry Israelis, shouting "we need bread, we need work," clashed with police Tuesday in a second straight day of protests in the north over economic hardships.

Residents of Hazor Haglilit blocked the road leading to their town to protest against the sack-

ing of 150 workers from a factory closed by its owners — Israel's financially troubled Koor Industries.

"We want to work, we want bread, we want bread for our children," one furious protester shouted.

Dozens of demonstrators scuffled with police. One was

arrested after he hurled stones and smashed a car windshield.

Farmers in northern Israel staged a strike for the second consecutive day. Many of the residents of 52 farming settlements stayed away from work and kept children home from school.

The farmers are demanding increased government subsidies for eggs and poultry. But Agriculture Minister Avraham Katz-Or has told them that they must diversify and rely less on agriculture.

Israel's communal farmers are saddled with multi-billion dollar debts.

They accuse the government of ignoring them while giving financial incentives to settlement in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, home to one million Palestinians.

The farmers and factory workers delayed further protest action until next Monday, heeding a request by Finance Minister Shimon Peres to stop their demonstrations until he had an opportunity to deal with their financial woes.

Israel's inflation rate rose to 20.7 per cent last year, the highest annual figure since 1985 when an economic austerity plan brought inflation down from over 400 per cent.

TWA sells 11 jets

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Trans World Airlines Inc. (TWA) has sold 11 Jumbo jets for \$210 million to two leasing companies in an effort to raise cash and reduce its large debt, company officials said.

It's the second time in less than a month that the airline has announced the sale of an asset. On Dec. 18, TWA said it planned to sell its Chicago-London route and related assets to American Airlines for \$195 million. That deal must be approved by the federal government.

The news has angered many employees who believe TWA

owner Carl Icahn is slowly dismantling the airline, which is \$2.7 billion in debt and lags behind other major carriers in capital investment.

Icahn assured employees in a letter last month that he does not intend to dismantle TWA. "There is no possible way that TWA can get stronger if it gets smaller," Kent Scott, chairman of the union's executive council in St. Louis, a major hub city for the airline, has said.

But industry analysts say selling airplanes and leasing them back is quite common.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Wednesday, January 17, 1989
Central Bank official rates

	Buy	Sell	French franc	113.1	114.2
U.S. dollar	652.0	658.0	Japanese yen (for 100)	448.1	452.6
Pound Sterling	1080.1	1090.9	Dutch guilder	340.9	344.3
Deutschemark	384.5	388.3	Swedish crown	105.8	106.9
Swiss franc	431.5	435.8	Italian lira (for 100)	51.6	52.1
			Belgian franc (for 10)	183.5	185.3

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.

One Sterling	1.6450/60	U.S. dollars
One U.S. dollar	1.1645/55	Canadian dollar
	1.6963/70	Deutschemarks
	1.9125/35	Dutch guilders
	1.5105/15	Swiss francs
	35.52/57	Belgian francs
	5.7675/7725	French francs
	1263/1264	Italian lire
	145.55/65	Japanese yen
	6.1600/50	Swedish crowns
	6.5310/60	Norwegian crowns
	6.5640/90	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	410.60/411.10	U.S. dollars

World Stock Market

By Reuters

SYDNEY — The Australian market tracked the volatile Tokyo exchange. The all Ordinaries Index ended up 7.7 at 1,628.8.

TOKYO — Late session unwinding by arbitrageurs yanked the Nikkei Index off its highs to end down 28.22 at 36,821.14.

HONG KONG — An early surge was followed by profit taking. The Hang Seng Index ended 1.4 lower at 1270.39.

SINGAPORE — Share prices closed off their highs. The Straits Times Index gained 20.54 to 1,532.04.

BOMBAY — Fears of heavy taxes under the new government produced heavy selling for the third day in a row.

FRANKFURT — A technical recovery fizzled. The Dax Index closed at 1,802.48, up 13.8.

ZURICH — Swiss shares came off their early highs on profit taking. The SPI index closed four points firmer at 1,126.5.

PARIS — Business focused on special situation stocks and prices ended close to the day's highs in a partly technical recovery. The CAC-40 index gained 17.93 to 1,953.14.

LONDON — Shares edged back from early losses after Wall Street steadied. The FTSE index closed at 2,373.9, up 24.8.

NEW YORK — A wider trade gap and disappointing IBM earnings produced only a short-lived fall. At 1727 GMT the Dow Jones Industrial were up 10 points to 2,703.5.

THE BETTER HALF.

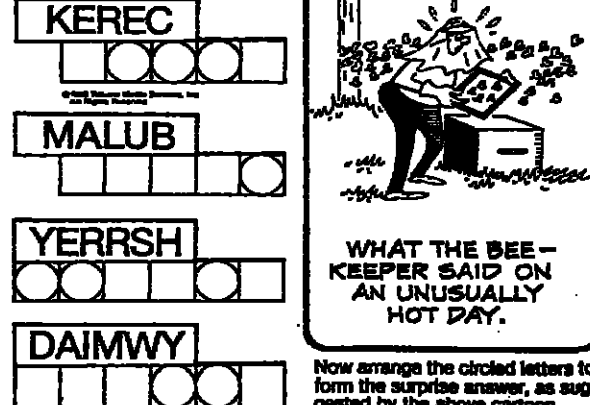
By Harris



"This morning I woke up and found a stranger in my house. It was my husband."

JUMBLE.

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer: IT'S "REPLACE THE NAIL"

Yesterday's Jumble: EAGLE FAIRY LANCER POPLAR
Answer: What to do when the barometer falls—REPLACE THE NAIL.



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY JANUARY 18, 1990

By Thomas S. Person, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: The one way to get through today's difficult aspects is with charm and by emphasizing the lighter side of life where romance, social events and similar matters are concerned.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Household details have a good chance of being perfected now. Accept an invitation with your attachment for important outside affair.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Your home can now be made immaculate for the future. Doing something special for your attachment will pay off big dividends.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) A wonderful day to visit both men and women friends into your home. Don't upset your attachment by expecting too much at this time.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Entertain women friends with distinction in your home. A time for you and your attachment to organize your future more efficiently.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Your business affairs should be going along better than usual. Be sure now to be more than usually romantic with your loved one.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) One of your best times to

make additions to or improvements in your home. Be out on the town as much as possible with your attachment.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) It now is your turn to entertain those special friends of whom you are especially fond. For important meetings, ask men into your home today.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Accept unusual conditions that now occur at your home and enjoy them. Be understanding and help loved one with problems.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) This should be a very pleasant social time for you. Keep letting your attachment know of your undying affection.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Friends now expect a great deal of you and don't disappoint them. Consider interests should occupy you and your loved one's interests now.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Invite persons you like and who you have recently met into your home. Be very emotional and sexy with your mate.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Don't get rattled because a bigwig will try to direct your every move. Your attachment now sees your best points and releases support.

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY JANUARY 19, 1990

By Thomas S. Person, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: This is a very good day to prepare yourself for the various and sundry conditions through which you can expand and extend your interests and horizons.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Welcome with open arms one from a distance who could become a good friend. Don't take any risks now by being careless or ignoring payments due and owing.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You can have a happy social or artistic time with an understanding friend. Put forth with considerable more intensity in your romantic relationship.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) See that you coordinate your efforts in any home project now. A woman can be considerable assistance in a business or money matter.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Get your attachment out in the world with you as much as possible. Two persons at home will aid you greatly in working out any business problems.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Communicating with good friends now will hold you their good will and friendship. Study sources that will show you the best way to handle your money.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Get rid of unnecessary things and conditions in your home with ado. You can get much cooperation now in any business matter of importance.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Make a special point to go

along with whatever good friends want you to do now. Don't allow a strange attitude on the part of your loved one to upset things.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You are about to get rid of one outlet so you can start another more practical one. Don't take unexpected guests at home and surprise the family today.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Do something very special to assume your attachment of your true devotion. You can now organize conditions at your residence on a much better basis.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Get financial matters completed as soon as possible for another avenue your attention. Tension over money can cause you to lose interest in duties.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You will have more good times if you better organize the moments when you see your friends. A couple will now do what will make conditions easier for you and your attachment.

Today's child: If your child were born today he or she will be very articulate and able to express themselves in a clear and concise manner on any subject that they have studied and examined. Other talents for writing, painting and other forms of self expression will allow this progeny to become known if that is their desire.

Australian Open:

McEnroe plays superbly to reach 3rd round

By Robert Woodward
Reuter

MELBOURNE — John McEnroe, enjoying his best start to a grand slam tournament for many years, on Wednesday gave his second tennis masterclass in two days to reach the third round of the Australian Open.

Repeating his first round performance, the American number four seed conceded just four games against Alex Antonitsch, driving the Austrian to distraction with a display of touch and vision most players on the circuit can only dream of.

"If I keep playing like this I'll be difficult to beat, I just hope it keeps going," said McEnroe after his 6-1, 6-2, 6-1 victory on Centre Court. "It's a great start, I haven't started like this in a grand slam for a while."

McEnroe's deft display, which reduced the frustrated Antonitsch to serving underarm for one point in the second set, was in sharp contrast to world number one Ivan Lendl's workmanlike demolition of Tomas Carbonell of Spain.

The Czechoslovak defending champion won 6-4, 6-2, 6-3 and realised he is somewhere off his best form. "I could always hit the ball better but I suppose as long as you're winning it doesn't matter how you hit the ball."

Steffi Graf, bidding for her third successive open title, was also below her best against American Erika de Lone, a teenager ranked 298 who achieved the rare distinction of breaking the world number one's serve twice in one set.

Graf, who won 6-1, 6-2, "blamed" Boris Becker for her below par performance following the West German pair's 30-minute practice session on Tuesday night.

"It was fun hitting with Boris, we had a good time had some good rallies and we both enjoyed it very much," she said. "You're trying a little bit harder, trying to play well and it's not too easy coming back (to the women's)

game) as maybe you're not concentrating."

Antonitsch, ranked 98th in the world, was demused within 13 minutes of the start of his match, finding himself 5-0 down against the expressionless McEnroe.

The three-times Wimbledon champion, who has yet to win in Melbourne, appeared to amble around the court while Antonitsch raced about on fruitless errands in the hot sun.

Eschewing Lendl's now-familiar legionnaire's hat, McEnroe, sporting a lurid green bandana, even read Antonitsch's underarm serve and won the point to take a 5-2 lead in the second set.

Antonitsch's patience finally ran out in the first game of the third set. A service ace was called out by umpire Richard Ings, although it was fired at the line furthest from his chair.

The Austrian, fined \$350 in the first round for an audible obscenity, received a warning for unsportsmanlike behaviour after angrily querying the decision.

One game point to McEnroe, Antonitsch hit a forehead and stared arm belatedly shot out.

It was the low point of a bad day for Antonitsch who made as if to hit the ball at Ings before thinking better of it and slumping in his chair.

McEnroe's display came as a blessed relief to the sun-blasted spectators on Centre Court who had earlier sat through nearly four hours of slam-bang tennis between number 15 seed Thomas Muster and Christo van Rensburg of South Africa.

The Austrian, a semifinalist last year, eventually won 1-6, 7-5, 7-5, 2-6, 8-6. "I don't maybe have the talent but I do my best and try to do my job as good as possible," he said.

Subtlety and shade were also in

short supply on court two where 13th seed Sergi Bruguera of Spain was beaten 6-4, 6-3, 1-6, 6-4 by Sweden's Mikael Pernfors.

Both players slugged and grunted their way through a stolid diet of baseline topspin before Pernfors, urged on by a large crowd of his sun-bathing compatriots, emerged from a 38-shot rally at matchpoint to reach the third round.

"I think for the first time since the U.S. Open I felt really comfortable playing," Pernfors said later. "I decided I was going to get him tired before I got tired."

Pernfors will meet Frenchman Henri Leconte, an artist in the McEnroe mould, whose recovery from six months out with a back



John McEnroe injury gathered pace with a 6-2, 4-6, 6-3, 6-4 defeat of Petr Korda of Czechoslovakia.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
& TAMMAM HIRSH
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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠ A7 ♣ QJ762 ♠ K1032 ♠ A
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠
4 ♠ Pass
What action do you take?

Q.2—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠ 73 ♠ 1042 ♠ KJ4 ♠ AJ102
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass
2 NT Pass
What do you bid now?

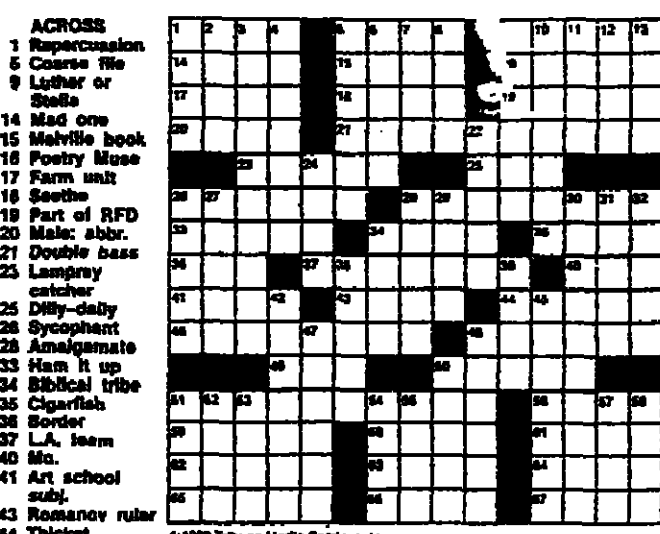
Q.3—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠ 73 ♠ 1042 ♠ KJ4 ♠ AJ108
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass
2 NT Pass
What do you bid now?

Q.4—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠ K107 ♠ K98 ♠ J652 ♠ J53
Partner opens the bidding with one diamond. What do you respond?

Q.5—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠ K107 ♠ K98 ♠ J652 ♠ J53
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 1 NT Pass
2 NT Pass
What action do you take?

Q.6—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠ A9852 ♠ Void ♠ J10753 ♠ 852
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ DM
What do you bid now?

THE Daily Crossword by Samuel K. Flagner



ACROSS
1 Repetition
6 Course fee
9 Luther or Stella
14 Mad one
15 Matville book
16 Poetry class
17 Farm unit
18 Soothe
20 Part of RFD
21 Male abbr.
22 Double bass
23 Lamprey
25 Catcher
26 Tidy-daily
28 Synonym
29 Anagram
33 Ham it up
34 Biblical tribe
35 Cigarfish
36 Solder
37 L.A. team
40 Ma.
41 Art school
43 Romanov ruler
44 Thicket
45 TX symbol
46 Lila's work
48 Kick oneself
50 Ferber novel
51 He's chicken
52 Sorry
53 Wanderer
54 Mailed
55 Fr. composer
56 Carroll heroine
57 Major finish
58 Harrow rival
59 far, politics
60 Bring up
61 Plane letters

DOWN
1 Jack of TV
2 Funny
3 Imagined
4 Equestrian
5 "Not — for tribute"
6 Highwayman
7 Love affair
8 Earth
9 Straw vote
10 Astoria
11 Menzies
12 Abbr. for a series
13 Function
14 Knock
15 Lecherous
16 Wild
17 Kind of acid
18 Lebanon tree
19 — and out
20 Fall guys
21 Principle
22 Lawn tool
23 Judy's daughter
24 Made believe
25 Schabacker
26 Rascally
27 Certain shoes
28 — pit
29 Marie or
30 Monks
31 Unusually easy job
32 Porter
33 Mideast
34 Belg. river
35 Whale
36 Conspiracy
37 Family members

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Soviets acknowledge Warsaw Pact shifts

VIENNA (AP) — A high-ranking Soviet general acknowledged Wednesday that the political changes among Moscow's East European allies would affect the Warsaw Pact military alliance.

"There will be changes in structure," said Gen. Nikolaj Chervov, head of the Directorate of the Soviet General Staff.

But he said the final form of those changes had not been decided.

Chervov spoke to reporters on the second day of unprecedented talks among the top officers of 35 nations about their military policies.

The three-week meeting opened Tuesday with Gen. Colin Powell, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, and his Soviet counterpart, Gen. Mikhail Moiseyev, outlining the superpowers' military strategies.

Western military experts have been anxious to hear reports from East bloc military leaders, hoping to learn more about how recent political events will shape future policies of the seven-nation Warsaw Pact.

The United States and 15 of its allies belong to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Chervov, speaking through an interpreter, said the Warsaw Pact's top governing body, the Political Consultative Committee, likely will be disbanded.

The panel is made up of the top Communist Party officials of the seven nations.

The fast pace of change in those countries, he said, has led to "the multiplicity of parties."

"The Communist parties are no longer leading the states," he said. "Therefore, the Political Consultative Committee will probably cease to exist of itself and perhaps there will be another supreme body."

The new one, he said, could be made up of the heads of state of those countries.

"We are still working on it," he said.

He said the top military officers in the Warsaw Pact countries have "confirmed their states will remain true to their (alliance) obligations."

Western officials have been looking for hints of a potential weakening in the East bloc nations' ties to the Warsaw Pact, the Soviet-led military alliance.

Sir David Craig, chief of the British Defence Staff, said Tuesday that he did not see signs of a collapse in the Warsaw Pact alliance.

"Clearly, I think they would all recognise amongst the seven of them that there are changes afoot," he said. "But to talk about the breakup of the (pact) was not the impression I was left with today."

Bulgaria's Gen. Christo Dobrev said Tuesday that his government was cutting troops, arms and defence spending to underscore its defensive posture.

Gen. Lee Butler of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff said Dobrev's remarks were an "early indication of where force structure might be going within the non-Soviet Warsaw Pact countries."

Also on Tuesday, Gen. Mikhail Moiseyev, the Soviet Union's top military officer, said at the meeting that the Kremlin would continue to make sharp cuts in troops, weapons and spending as part of plans to reshape its defence policy.

The West contends the Soviets' military might could seize and hold foreign territory in time of war. NATO contends its forces are the minimum necessary to defend against an attack.

Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev announced in December 1988 plans to reduce the Soviet army by 500,000 troops and reduce conventional, or non-nuclear, arms substantially.

Moiseyev said half the reductions were carried out last year and the rest will be completed in 1990.

As of Jan. 1, he said, Soviet armed forces were down by 265,000. He said 9,320 tanks, more than 5,000 artillery systems and 835 warplanes have been reduced in Europe.

The military budget, he said, was cut by 8.2 per cent last year and will be pared by more than 14 per cent in the next two years.



Philippine investigators question two dissidents arrested in connection with last month's failed coup attempt.

Philippine forces capture top leader of aborted coup

MANILA (Agencies) — Philippine security forces captured one of the top leaders of last month's failed army coup after cornering him before dawn Wednesday at his Manila hideout. He was the second rebel officer to be seized in four days.

Discharged navy lieutenant commander Jaime Lucas, listed as number four in the hierarchy of the country's most wanted rebel officers, broke a leg when he jumped out of a second floor window as constabulary troops surrounded his hideout, a military spokesman said.

"We want reforms in government. In this bureaucracy, it is the small people who suffer...I have no regrets," the 45-year-old Lucas, on crutches and with his left foot bandaged, told reporters after his capture.

Lucas was the second coup leader to be captured in four days and the third to fall into government hands since the military announced a bounty of 11.5 million pesos (\$510,000) for the capture of top officers who nearly toppled President Corason Aquino in the December rebellion.

Lucas, with a price of one

million pesos (\$44,500) on his head, had been in hiding for more than two years after taking part in another coup attempt on Aug. 28, 1987.

Aquino has quelled six army rebellions in her four years in office.

On Wednesday Aquino ordered the suspension of a provincial governor for his alleged role in December's failed coup attempt.

Also Wednesday, opposition Senator Juan Ponce Enrile appeared before a government commission to dispute administration claims that rebel soldiers were at his home on the first day of the coup attempt, linking him with the rebellion.

Presidential spokesman Lourdes Sytaung said Aquino ordered Local Governments Secretary Luis Santos and Defence Secretary Fidel Ramos to serve the suspension order on Rodolfo Aguinaldo, governor of Cagayan province.

The move came one day after the supreme court overturned a local court's order blocking the 60-day suspension for Aguinaldo ordered by the government last week.

Sytaung said the court ruling removed the last legal obstacle to Aguinaldo's suspension.

During the failed coup from Dec. 1-9, Aguinaldo allegedly told a Manila radio station that he was sending tanks and artillery to the capital to support the rebel soldiers.

Aguinaldo, a former lieutenant colonel, was implicated but never charged in an August 1987 coup attempt. He resigned from the armed forces and was elected governor in January 1988.

After leaving the military, Aguinaldo organised a private army to fight communist rebels. He has threatened to lead a "people power" uprising if the government tries to enforce his suspension.

Enrile, meanwhile, produced 18 security guards from his neighbourhood who testified that they saw no rebel soldiers in the area on the day the coup attempt was launched.

The National Bureau of Investigation has recommended that Enrile be charged with rebellion. It said three waiters had stated they saw a rebel leader, Gregorio Honasan, at the senator's home Dec. 1.

Breakthrough accord gives U.N. key role in Cambodia

PARIS (Agencies) — The U.N. Security Council's five permanent members have agreed to seek a Cambodian settlement, based on establishing a U.N. administration in the country until free elections and on international peacekeepers guaranteeing security.

After two days of meetings, the five countries Tuesday issued a 16-point summary of agreed principles, including an "effective U.N. presence" to assure internal security for an unspecified transition period before the elections.

A special representative of the U.N. secretary-general should be put in charge of U.N. activities in Cambodia until the new elected government takes office, the document said.

Diplomats attending the talks hailed the statement as a leap forward in settling the Cambodian conflict, following the breakdown of a 19-nation peace conference in Paris last summer.

"The most important thing is that all parties, including the Chinese, want this thing ended," one diplomat said.

Support from China and the Soviet Union, the backers of two enemy sides in the Cambodian conflict, was crucial to get the plan, initially proposed by Australia, off the ground.

Both the Chinese-backed Khmer Rouge, the dominant military group in a three-party

guerrilla coalition, and the Vietnamese-installed government in Phnom Penh, had previously shied away from proposals of U.N. involvement.

China, isolated internationally since last year's June crackdown against pro-democracy students, expressed concern during the meeting about the upsurge of fighting in Cambodia.

"The civil war is in progress as we speak," said a Western diplomat. "We must move fast. More meetings are needed but this is not bad going."

The accord, which appeals for a settlement between the four Cambodian factions, will be submitted to them before being discussed again at a meeting by the same officials in New York in about two weeks.

The group is expected to hold a third round of talks in the French capital in mid-February while pressing for a revival of the Paris peace conference. A senior U.S. administration official estimated the new process, if it continued, could last two to six months.

"We're not talking about a process that would take several years, but it's clear it will take several months," a senior U.S. official said on condition of not being identified.

The official said many details needed to be worked out and all the Cambodian parties would have to give up an effort to win

on the battlefield.

The Vietnamese-backed government of Premier Hun Sen and the three guerrilla factions allied in an uneasy coalition all have indicated support for a major U.N. role.

Tuesday's statement suggested a "supreme national council" might be set up as "the repository of Cambodian sovereignty during the transition process."

It was not clear who would serve on such a council or what specific powers it might yield.

The document made no direct mention of the Cambodian government, the Khmer Rouge rebels fighting it or Prince Norodom Sihanouk, leader of a three-party guerrilla coalition that includes the Khmer Rouge.

It said the five U.N. Security Council members would "welcome an early resumption of a constructive dialogue among the Cambodian factions" and said the transition process "should not be dominated by any one of them."

The five countries in the meeting said there was an "urgent need to speed up diplomatic efforts" to bring about a settlement. In a reference to Vietnamese troops, whose pullout was announced last September, it said the "complete withdrawal of foreign forces must be verified" by the United Nations.

The five delegation heads met with French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas at the conclusion of the talks Tuesday evening.

Dumas opened the discussions Monday by saying the five countries had a special responsibility to make sure the Khmer Rouge, the strongest of three rebel groups fighting Cambodia's Vietnamese-backed government, never return to power in Cambodia.

In Jakarta, Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas said Monday his talks with all four Cambodian factions found no objections to discussing Australia's proposal for an interim U.N. government.

Son Sam, a former Prime minister who heads the non-Communist Khmer People's National Liberation Front, wrote in an article in Tuesday's editions of the conservative daily Le Figaro that he would approve a U.N. interim administration and a U.N. peacekeeping force to halt all military operations.

Son Sam said the three-party guerrilla coalition should retain Cambodia's seat in the United Nations during the transition period, but should refrain from participation in debates or votes.

Other proposals have called for declaring the Cambodian seat vacant until free elections are held.

The guerrilla coalition has held Cambodia's U.N. seat since 1982.

Largest anti-apartheid group challenges Pretoria regime

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — The country's largest anti-apartheid coalition, forced to operate covertly since its banning two years ago, announced Wednesday that it was resuming full-scale, above-ground operations as a challenge to the government.

Senior leaders of the United Democratic Front (UDF), representing more than 600 organisations with more than two-million members, said they would reopen offices across the country and begin planning for a national conference in April.

"In what we see as a challenging period ahead of us, we have decided to claim our rights to engage in open opposition activity," Murphy Morobe, one of the coalition's chief spokesmen, said at a news conference. "We owe it to our people that the leadership of our movement is openly available at this crucial moment in the struggle."

Morobe also said a delegation of 22 leaders of the front planned to meet soon with Nelson Mandela, jailed leader of the African National Congress (ANC) movement. Mandela is expected to be released in the coming weeks.

after nearly 28 years in prison. The United Democratic Front, which shares the ANC's goal of creating a non-racial democracy in South Africa, was established in 1983 to mobilise resistance to a new constitution that entrenched the exclusion of the black majority from parliament.

Many leaders of the organisation were detained for two to three years after a nationwide state of emergency was declared in June 1986. In February 1988, the government listed the front among 17 organisations prohibited in engaging in any activities.

"The emergency has hurt us and at some levels disorganised us," said Azhar Cachalia, a member of the front's executive committee. "But the main purpose of the emergency, to smash the UDF, has failed. We are probably stronger now than we have ever been."

He said the decision to resume overt operations was intended as a challenge to President F.W. de Klerk, who since taking office in August has eased restrictions on anti-government protests and invited black leaders to help negotiate a new constitution that would extend some form of political rights to blacks.

"We are now, in a concrete way, beginning to test his intentions and his commitment to a new South Africa," Cachalia said.

Morobe said no date had been set for the meeting between front leaders and Mandela, who has been conferring at his prison residence with government officials and prominent anti-apartheid activists.

"We believe he is in a historically unique position that can open up new possibilities and opportunities which can only advance the cause of liberation," Morobe said.

Morobe said the front and the African National Congress agree on the pre-conditions needed before the two organisations will enter negotiations with the government.

They include the release of Mandela and other political prisoners, lifting the state of emergency, unbanning the ANC and other opposition groups, removing soldiers from black townships and ending political trials.

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Stoltenberg begins UNHCR work

GENEVA (AP) — Thorvald Stoltenberg, a former Norwegian foreign minister and ambassador to the United Nations, has started work as the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), heading an agency responsible for 15 million refugees worldwide.

Spokesman Raymond Hall said Stoltenberg arrived in Geneva Monday. He was elected for a four-year term by the U.N. General Assembly on Nov. 20 to replace Jean-Pierre Hocke, who resigned following allegations he had misused funds.

The 58-year old Norwegian takes over as head of the agency at a time when it is struggling with an unprecedented financial crisis and ever increasing number of refugees.

"It's no joke to lead an organisation that is supposed to help 15 million people in such a difficult

time and with an extremely tight budget. Still, my old dream has been fulfilled," Stoltenberg said in an interview published Tuesday in the Norwegian newspaper Aftenposten.

Hall said the worldwide refugee population rose by about 700,000 last year, swelled by a huge influx into Ethiopia of people fleeing the conflict in neighbouring Somalia and Sudan, and by continuing mass movements of refugees from Mozambique into Malawi in southern Africa.

According to UNHCR figures there are now more than one million refugees in the Horn of Africa and another one million in the south of the continent.

Afghans constitute the largest refugee population, numbering some 5.5 million in Pakistan and Iran. Hall said about 60,000 Afghans left their troubled home-

land last year where fighting continued after the last Soviet troops left the country in February.

Despite the UNHCR's growing responsibilities, it is trying to implement an austerity package to cut a \$40 million deficit carried over from 1989.

"The most important thing about the job, aside from raising more money, may be to contribute to improving the political climate so that refugees can return home," Stoltenberg said in the newspaper interview.

Under a programme agreed by the UNHCR executive committee last October, expenditure on general programmes will be limited to \$190 million in the first half of this year. A special meeting of the executive committee at the end of May will decide on spending for the rest of 1989.

Hocke, Stoltenberg Swiss predecessor, had proposed a general budget of \$414 million for 1990. He resigned following allegations that he misused a special educational fund financed by Denmark and Sweden to upgrade air tickets for business class, authorised by the United Nations, to first class.

Stoltenberg held a number of high government posts in Norway and served as foreign minister from March 1987 until Gro Harlem Brundtland's Labour Party government resigned last October. He took up the U.N. ambassadorship in New York.

A UNHCR statement said Stoltenberg had appointed Douglas Stafford, of the United States, as deputy high commissioner for refugees. Stafford was formerly in charge of finance and administration at the U.N. Development Programme in New York.

IRA suspect claims link to Thatcher blast

WEST PALM BEACH, Florida (AP) — A suspected Irish Republican Army (IRA) member bragged that his group had connections to a 1984 bombing attempt against British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, according to documents released Tuesday.

The statement was attributed to Kevin McKinley, 33, one of four suspected IRA members arrested after they allegedly bought an anti-aircraft missile and other weapons from federal undercover agents last week.

The men told undercover agents they planned to use the Stinger missile against British troops in Northern Ireland.

On Tuesday, following requests by defence attorneys and prosecutors for more time to prepare the case, U.S. Magistrate Ann Vinnac postponed a bail

hearing for the men until Friday. The men, who waved and smiled at the small group of friends in court, said nothing as they were led away by U.S. marshals.

According to an affidavit by special agent Stephen Barborino and U.S. customs special agent Mark Oden, McKinley said the Stinger was to be used by the provisional wing of the IRA against British helicopters in Northern Ireland.

McKinley also told agents "his people" were responsible for the Oct. 12, 1984, bombing of a hotel in Brighton, England, where Thatcher and other Conservative Party officials were holding a meeting, according to the affidavit.

During several meetings between Nov. 20 and Jan. 12, the suspects also said they were seek-

ing .50 caliber rifles, C-4 explosives, and grenade launchers to pierce newly developed British armour.

The magistrate also scheduled a Jan. 26 pre-trial hearing to hold an arraignment if a grand jury indicts the men, who have been held without bond since their arrest. If no indictment is handed up, a hearing to decide the strengths of the charges will be held.

"All have a viable defence and it will be pursued to the highest degree," said attorney Roger Colton, who at the hearing represented defendants Kevin McKinley, 33; Seamus Moley, 30; and Joseph McColegan, 39 all Irish citizens.

Cotton, however, would not give details of a possible defence, but noted that entrapment is "a possible avenue."

Co-defendant Sean McCann, 34, a Canadian, was represented by attorney Michael Salmick, although the final count for all four men has not been set.

The affidavit said Moley and McCann crossed into the United States Dec. 14 from Canada at Alexandria Bay, New York. It is not certain how long McKinley and McColegan were in the country.

Undercover agents posing as arms dealers arrested the men Friday after Moley allegedly handed over \$47,500 for a Stinger missile, and McKinley was taken to a West Palm beach warehouse to inspect the weapon.

Agents had planned to follow McKinley from the warehouse, but he was arrested on the spot after he discovered the Stinger did not fit in his car, officials said.

C8 LUMN

\$50m sought for Renoir work

NEW YORK (AP) — Pierre-Auguste Renoir's "Au moulin de la Galette" will be offered at a May 16 auction for an estimated \$40 million to \$50 million, Sotheby's announced. The painting, executed in 1876, shows an outdoor dance hall frequented by the artist. It has been in the private collection of Mr. and Mrs. John Hay Whitney for 60 years. A larger version of the work is currently in the Musée d'Orsay in Paris. It is believed one was painted at the scene and the other at Renoir's studio — but no one knows which is which. Sotheby's will take this version to Paris for a comparison before the New York sale.

Car-free Sunday to combat smog

MILAN (AP) — The Milan city council has decided to ban driving in the entire metropolitan area this Sunday if a high level of pollutants from heavy smog did not decrease before then. Traffic will be banned from the northern city and 30 suburbs between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. Sunday, the council ruled. The area is home to three million people. Other measures will be applied this week to combat the pollution that has clouded the city. For example, large trucks will be prevented from stopping in the city, and smaller trucks will not be able to load and unload on Saturday, Italian media reported. Pollution Tuesday surpassed the first alarm level of 10 microgrammes of carbon dioxide per cubic metre at nearly all smog control stations in the Milan area, said Roberto Gualdi of the local health services. At that level, ill or elderly people are advised to be cautious about going out.

Scuffle over AIDS drug profits

LONDON (AP) — A scuffle broke out Tuesday at the annual shareholders' meeting of Wellcome Plc when a shareholder questioned profits being made on a drug used to treat AIDS. Rob Archer, of Edinburgh, scuffled with other shareholders when he tried to grab a microphone to speak to Wellcome's chairman, Sir Alfred Sheppard. Security guards quickly moved in. Archer, a member of the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power, complained that the price of Wellcome's drug Zalcovir, also known as AZT, was too high and it made treatment for individuals very expensive. He also asked why the Wellcome company's board refused to talk to organisations involved with AIDS. "Last year Sir Alfred promised a meeting then reneged," Archer said.

'Baby boom' 9 months after Hugo

GASTONIA, North Carolina (AP) — Gaston County is due for a baby boom in June and early July — about nine months after Hurricane Hugo hit, doctors say. The storm knocked out power and essentially shut down the county when it struck in September. "Any time there is a natural disaster of snowstorm or anything that keeps people at their homes, this happens," said Deborah Hudson, business manager for Gaston Gynecology and Obstetrics, one of two prenatal centres in the county. By mid-January, the centre already surpassed the number of new patients that showed up in December. Hudson expects to have 90 to 100 new patients this month, compared with about 50 for a normal January. Many of the expecting mothers are due in early summer. "That's a pretty good indication that Hugo had something to do with," she said.

Singh orders resignation of all Indian state governors

NEW DELHI (R) — India's new government has ordered the mass resignation of governors of the country's 25 states, the Interior Ministry said Wednesday.

It is the first major purge ordered by Prime Minister Vishwanath Prasad Singh who ousted Rajiv Gandhi's Congress Party in November elections, accusing it of corruption.

"The prime minister feels that some changes have to be made where there were political appointments by the then ruling party," a Home (Interior) Ministry spokesman said.

Such appointments had broken the tradition that governors should be "non-political figures distinguished in public life."

Governors, appointed by the national government in New Delhi, are mainly limited to a ceremonial role but can assume executive power if there is a crisis in the elected state assemblies.

The spokesman said the government would probably reappoint many of the governors but

Global weather (major world cities)

	MIN.	°C	°F	MAX.	°C	°F	Weather
AMSTERDAM	07	45	10	50	Cloudy		
ATHENS	05	41	10	59	Clear		
BANGKOK	26	79	81	88	Clear		
BOMBAY	24	75	81	88	Clear		
CHICAGO	10	50	17	58	Cloudy		
CHONGKING	02	36	12	54	Cloudy		
COPENHAGEN	06	43	10	50	Rain		
DALLAS	08	46	10	58	Cloudy		
GENEVA	01	30	18	51	Cloudy		
HONG KONG	13	55	16	61	Clear		
ISTANBUL	03	37	48	58	Clear		
JAKARTA	23	73	16	81	Clear		
LOS ANGELES	03	38	16	51	Clear		
MADRID	01	34	13	50	Clear		
MECCA	15	59	27	81	Cloudy		
MONTREAL	01	34	06	41	Rain		
MOSCOW	15	59	15	55	Cloudy		
NEW DELHI	07	45	24	70	Clear		
NEW YORK	04	39	13	55	Cloudy		
PARIS	08	46	12	54	Cloudy		
ROME	03	37	16	51	Clear		
SEATTLE	02	36	13	55	Clear		
SYDNEY	08	46	22	73	Clear		
TOKYO	07	45	27	68	Clear		
VIENNA	08	46	19	58	Clear		